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THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

A monthly Magazine to maintain the cause of
TRUTH, FREEDOM, and COMPREHENSIVENESS
in the Church of England.

EDITOR: H. D. A. MAJOR, B.D.

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THE

MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

No. 7. OCTOBER, 1921. Vol. XI

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

'The Bankruptcy of Modernism.'

Some years ago the *Church Times*, in a leading article, christened the Modernists 'The Sterile Party.' In its issue of September 23rd, it deals with the papers of the Cambridge Conference under the genial heading, 'The Bankruptcy of Modernism.' Its leader writer affirms that 'as a religious force, Modernism is bankrupt,' and goes on to assume that no doubt Modernists will hotly deny the accusation of failure.

It is to be hoped that Modernists will not waste their time and energy in such denials. These matters are for the future Church historian, and we shall do well not to try to anticipate his verdict. The *Church Times* charitably opines that English Modernists will shortly arrive at the same position of unbelief as M. Loisy. The repudiation at Cambridge of the more extreme views of Prof. Kirsopp Lake would seem to suggest that they will not. Certainly the most trenchant English critic of M. Loisy is the Dean of St. Paul's, and English Modernists are more likely to be influenced by one who is as lucid and as learned as the Gallic professor, but whose native genius has not been oppressed and dispirited by the artificial atmosphere of continental Romanism.

We believe that the Modernist movement in England is little more than in its infancy. It seems to us even now to show a fair measure of vitality and to have the promise of much usefulness. However, we need not speculate about that.

What is clear is that it requires to do much solid, serious, self-sacrificing work if it is to be of real service to the cause of Christ both at home and abroad.

So far the Modernist movement has been instrumental in keeping within the English Church a number of thoughtful modern-minded men and women who might otherwise have given it up as hopelessly obscurantist. Ere long we may trust that it will be turning back from secularist ideals and agnostic indifference many who have joined the ranks of the opponents of the Church because they have felt that the Church is the opponent of scientific and historic truth, or if not the active adversary of new truth, at least entirely indifferent to its claims.

It is not without significance that the *Literary Guide*, the chief organ of professed secularism in this country, recently made the following statement:

> 'Let Rationalists expose freely the absurdities of orthodoxy, but let them remember the high-minded and cultured liberal theologian is going to be their doughtiest opponent.'

Certainly the only type of Churchman who can read the diatribes of Messrs. P. Vivian, J. M. Robertson and J. McCabe with complete conviction of their futility, and yet with deep sympathy for the experiences and motives which have prompted them, are the Modernists.

It has been the fashion for writers in the ecclesiastical Press, who themselves are not Fellows of the British Academy, to complain of the 'incurable donnishness' of leading members of the Churchmen's Union, but if we mistake not there is a growing conviction among Modernists that they have a message for the unlearned as well as the learned classes. A few days ago we received from a contributor of one of the papers at the Cambridge Conference a letter in which he remarked that he had been speaking on Modernism in Hyde Park and found himself listened to with sympathy and attention. The myth that the Churchmen's Union consists chiefly of dons is probably not so widely credited as it used to be by readers of the *Church Times*. There are not a few capable parish priests among our members, and there seems every prospect of their numbers increasing. Still, it needs to be remembered that Modernism, whilst a religious movement, is also an educational movement.

It has originated in the conflict between new truth and old tradition, and therefore it has a particular mission to those who are aware of the claims of new truth and are under some obligation to teach it. The Modernist movement needs to get into closer touch with the educationist. The Modernist is convinced that sound education (not mere instruction) is impossible without religion, but religion in its traditional form is showing itself less and less capable of gripping the whole-hearted loyalty of young men and young women. There is tremendous need for the re-interpretation of Christianity in the face of advancing secularism. How this is to be done is not by any means an easy problem to solve. Whilst we are certain that only those who have themselves passed from traditionalism to modernism, and have felt that they have exchanged Egypt for Canaan in the process, are capable of being of real use to others, yet there are many practical questions which arise for the most whole-hearted and enthusiastic Modernist that can only be satisfactorily answered as the result of practical experience. In this connection we would draw the attention of some of our readers to a letter in our correspondence pages by a public schoolmaster dealing with Confirmation and a conference which it is proposed to hold at Ripon Hall to consider some aspects of it.

There is another matter which presses for our attention as Modernists. It is the Foreign Mission Field. Certain distinguished missionaries are members of the Churchmen's Union —not openly, perhaps we ought to add, 'for fear of the Jews.' They feel, especially in the East, that there is great need for a Modernist presentation of the Christian religion. Most Modernists we may assume contribute to one or more missionary societies, but would it not be well for them to concentrate on some particular piece of Modernist missionary effort? Could they not, for instance, begin by establishing in one of the Oriental Universities a Professorship of Christian Apologetic, which might be instrumental in winning to Christian truth those whom the various traditional presentations fail to win? Our greater Foreign Missionary Societies are widening so rapidly in their outlook that young Modernists would, we believe, have little difficulty in being accepted nowadays for foreign service, although a few years ago those holding their

views would have stood no chance at all of acceptance except in a lay capacity. Hence there is no need to-day for Modernists to think of establishing a Missionary Society of their own; but such a piece of particular Modernist missionary endeavour as we have suggested seems well worth while.

Modernist Defence of the Conference.

A number of clergymen before they had read the conference papers wrote and spoke severely of their authors, and some, after they had read the conference papers, did credit to themselves and their order by publicly withdrawing their condemnations. The authors of the papers were described in Press and pulpit as 'hierophants of heresy,' 'sceptics in the pulpit,' 'wreckers of the faith.' Popular preachers, regardless of the alarm they were creating, declared that the Christian faith had been shattered; others demanded that a definite repudiation of the conference utterances should be made by the Episcopal Bench and published in the secular Press; others urged that the National Assembly must lose no time in giving bishops power to deal with heterodox deans. Considering the way in which our newspapers served us in the war, although with the very best intentions, considering also the possibility of our ecclesiastical enemies using the Press as they have used the Pulpit, to create a painful impression of their own ends, it is strange that the great bulk of public speakers and writers never thought of questioning the accuracy of the reports. Some few there were who, knowing the character of the Cambridge speakers, claimed publicly that they could not be what they were accused of being.

The Dean of Carlisle took immediate steps to check the more flagrant mis-statements of one newspaper by requiring their public withdrawal under pain of legal proceedings. The immediate publication of his conference paper, followed by an explanatory sermon in the most widely-circulating organs of the Press in the north of England, checked the stream of condemnation. Finally, the Bishop of Carlisle disappointed the heresy hunters by publishing the following statement:

> 'I have not hitherto expressed any opinion upon the controversy which has been carried on in the newspapers concerning the views

expressed by certain eminent theologians at the Cambridge Conference of Liberal Churchmen. My silence has been due not to timidity or to any undue degree of caution, but simply to the belief that it is neither wise nor just to form an opinion upon abbreviated reports in newspapers of papers which were themselves incomplete expressions of the beliefs of those who wrote them. I have received many letters—not, I am glad to say, from within the diocese—inviting me either to prosecute the Dean of Carlisle or at once to condemn his paper as heretical. I have read the paper carefully and can find nothing in it which amounts to a denial of any article of the Creed. So far from being a denial of the Divinity of our Lord, it is an attempt at once to explain that doctrine and to establish it. Whether the attempt is successful or not is a question upon which opinions may reasonably and even violently differ, and there are statements upon matters of Biblical criticism within the paper which may to many readers seem incompatible with the conclusions reached. But I hope that before forming a final judgment, those who are interested in the Dean's opinions will at least read the sermon which he published subsequently to the conference.'

The work of defence received notable assistance from the Dean of St. Paul's, who contributed several popular articles on Modernism to the *Evening Standard*. As might be expected he made some impressive statements, of which the following was not the least significant:

'We are then faced with the gigantic task of reconstructing, or, rather of constructing for the first time, a type of Christianity which is in conformity with the genius of our nation. . . . I am strongly convinced that the cause of religion has little to fear and much to hope from a thoroughly courageous treatment of these questions. The present state of affairs is intolerable. A clergyman is expected to believe, or at least to profess, a variety of opinions, relating to strictly scientific facts, which all educated men know to be absurd, and it is supposed by many that we cannot be Christians unless we believe them. This is to put a stumbling block in the way of faith. . . . Faith is an experiment which ends as an experience, a dedication of the intellect as well as the will to the pursuit of all that is true and good. Personally I am not at all afraid that honest thinking will ever lead us away from Christianity; but some traditional beliefs will have to go. Tertullian, as long ago as A.D. 200 said: "Our Lord called Himself the Truth; He never called Himself Tradition." '

The Rev. C. W. Emmet took the occasion when preaching in St. Paul's from the text: 'Ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them,' to refer to the way in which the authorities of the English Church had in the past condemned certain notable clergymen for courageously expressing views which were not in harmony with the traditional and popular theology of their day, but which afterwards had

come to be accepted by the Church of England. He recalled how, in 1869, a leading Church newspaper wrote as follows :

> '"On that darkest day in the whole year was perpetrated the darkest crime which had ever been perpetrated in the English Church." The crime was the consecration to the See of Exeter of Dr. Temple. He had been a contributor to *Essays and Reviews*, a book which takes up positions which to-day would be regarded as commonplaces. Dr. Pusey speaks of Dr. Temple as having "participated in the ruin of countless souls." Archdeacon Denison spoke of the young being "tainted and corrupted and thrust almost to hell by the action of this book." "In my judgment, of all books in any language which I ever laid hands upon, it is incomparably the worst. It contains all the poison which is to be found in Tom Paine's *Age of Reason*, while it has the additional disadvantage of having been written by clergymen." The same sort of language was used of Charles Kingsley. He was accused by a reviewer of high standing of heresy, of encouraging profligacy, of despising doctrines consecrated by the faith of ages. When *Two Years Ago* appeared, the religious press charged him with Pantheism and Rationalism.'

After referring to the condemnation of F. D. Maurice, he dealt with Bishop Colenso and the notable controversy raised by his now generally accepted conclusions. Of that controversy the present Archbishop of Canterbury said :

> 'Looking back upon the controversy now . . . most critics who are at the pains to examine what it was that Dr. Colenso really said, will doubt whether to marvel more at the alarm his words aroused, or at the arguments employed in answer to them.'

Reviewing other cases, the preacher asked :

> 'Are we to be as short-sighted as many of our own fellow-churchmen during the nineteenth century when modern criticism and modern science first began to be taken seriously? Are we to slay our modern prophets and leave it to our successors to build their sepulchres—it may be in this very Cathedral? Are we to condemn off-hand, as disloyal and heretical, teaching which another generation may recognize as the revelation of the Spirit of God? Can we be sure that if the Church of England goes on indefinitely repeating these mistakes of policy there will be any Church left to repent in due time of its false judgments? You cannot silence modern thought, but it is possible to drive it from a Church so effectually that that Church is left safe, uncontaminated, and dead.
>
> 'Our Church, thank God, is not dead. But how much stronger would she be if she had readily welcomed the new light brought by her nineteenth century prophets, instead of admitting it piece-meal, grudgingly, and under protest. Think of the gain, if the friction and wasted energy spent in the futilities of heresy-hunting had been replaced by the eager desire to assimilate all that was true in the new learning. The crisis of which we have spoken with respect to the younger generation might have been largely avoided.
>
> 'Surely it is wiser and more Christian, surely it shows a greater faith in truth and in God's guidance in his people, to try sympatheti-

cally to understand the new views. Warned by the lessons of the past, we may resolve to weigh them patiently, examine and test them with an open mind, determined to sift the true from the false. It is always so much easier to raise the cry of heresy and save ourselves the trouble of serious thinking, but it is not in accordance with the spirit of Him who came to bring the new wine, who spoke of the scribe instructed in the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven as bringing forth from his store things new and old, things old, no doubt, but things new as well. I grant you that this will sometimes mean bearing with teaching which time will ultimately show to be erroneous, but it is better to suffer a few heretics than to cast out with them others whom the future will regard as our prophets, as the true champions of religious faith.

'A Bishop of Lincoln, who himself would hardly be reckoned as a Modernist, said not long ago that "He believed the men who might be called the English Modernists were not unsettling the Faith, but interpreting it, and making it clear to the modern man, and within a generation they would be looked back to as men who helped to build up the Faith of the English Church."

'In spite of the mistakes to which I have referred the Church of England has, on the whole, been rightly famed for her tolerance. We may make sarcastic epigrams about her sheltering three religions under one roof. It has been her glory that she has found room for High, Low and Broad. I believe God is now calling her to a higher task, to weld these hitherto discordant elements into a homogeneous unity. Can the three parties learn to live as brethren in one family? The first condition must be a readiness to discuss religious differences in a quite different temper of mind. We can at least cease to believe the worst things of one another on the slightest evidence. We can at least cease to take the extremest utterance of the extremest men in any school with which we are not agreed, and hold up these as the true characteristics and the logical outcome of that school. We can determine never to condemn on the strength of fragmentary quotations or obviously prejudiced reviews. We can refrain from flinging about all too loosely terms of abuse such as disloyal, heretic, or infidel.'

Not a little support was given in the secular Press to the efforts of the conference to serve a needful end. Modernists will feel grateful for the statement in the *Times Literary Supplement* of September 22nd, that the writers of the papers 'were animated by a true religious spirit and were anxious to secure a reverent yet free consideration of one of the basal elements of Christianity,' and that the papers 'show sympathy with what is in men's minds at the present day,' and 'are important for all students of modern Christology.'

On the whole the ecclesiastical Press was less favourable. Yet, with certain notable exceptions, it was moderate compared with what it would have been a few years ago. *The Challenge*, however, gave immediate and unqualified support to the theo-

logical endeavours and religious reverence of the conference, and expressed the conviction that members of the Student Christian Movement would welcome its constructive efforts to formulate a modern Christology.

Bishop Gore's Criticism of the Conference.

Much of the Press and Pulpit criticism of the conference papers may be safely ignored. In many cases the critics had been at no pains to read the papers, or even if they had read them to understand the point of view of their writers. As we scanned some of the more fluent of these criticisms, we were reminded of a mediaeval chronicler's remark concerning one who disputed with St. Anselm: 'The ignorance of Thomas lent wings to his eloquence.' Very different indeed was the criticism by Bishop Gore published in the *Church Times* of September 23rd. It was, as might be expected, conscientious and scholarly, and is eminently deserving of attention by Modernists. Every Modernist would wish to agree with the Bishop, for no Modernist can forget the great services which he has rendered to Modernism; but it is not possible even for respect and goodwill to settle these matters. Whilst we feel that the Bishop has been at great pains to understand the views put forth at the Cambridge Conference and to be just to them, we cannot feel in all cases that he has understood them or is just to them. Rather with the object of explanation than of refutation, we would refer to some of them briefly.

While we hold that Bishop Gore is correct in his account of Dr. Barnes' Christology, he is not correct in his description of Dean Rashdall's. We do not think that the Dean's Christology is Adoptionist: we believe that Dr. Rashdall's philosophy would be in conflict with such a Christology. Nor is the Theology of the editorial Introduction correctly described by Bishop Gore as Stoic. Two of the outstanding features of Stoicism were its Pantheism and its failure to recognise the supremacy of love. We are not Stoics. We do not think of God primarily as the Universal Reason, although we should not deny that He is such if others urged it. We think of Him primarily as personal—the Living God (the adjective 'living' meant here for the Hebrews what modern men mean by 'per-

sonal '), and then we think of Him not as Reason but as Love, and with Pascal we look upon Love as belonging to an order superior even to that of Reason. To say 'God is love' seems to us the highest way of speaking of Him,

> 'For the loving worm within its clod
> Were diviner than a loveless God.'

Hence it is primarily as man becomes more loving that he becomes more God-like. Yet Dr. Gore is correct in affirming that we believe in only one substance of the Godhead and the Manhood, and that our conception of the difference between Deity and Humanity is one of degree. The distinction between Creator and creature upon which Dr. Gore and the older theologians place so much emphasis, seems to us to be a minor distinction. It is like the distinction between omnipotent and not omnipotent. It is not a moral distinction at all, and we fail to see how one can base an ethical system upon it. The distinction between perfect goodness and imperfect goodness, between love and hatred, justice and injustice, truth and falsehood, self-sacrifice and selfishness, are the really important distinctions in the Universe, and seem to offer a much more secure foundation for Christian ethics than the distinction between Creator and creature.

Dr. Gore writes:

> 'I own it makes me shiver when in this report I read Canon Tollinton saying: "The cringing of the slave is gone. 'Spare me, good Lord'—what a conception of the Divine Nature does this imply!—is not the prayer of Jesus," nor, it is implied, the prayer proper for us sinners.'

There is nothing in this statement by Dr. Tollinton which is opposed either to humility or to the confession of sin. 'Spare me, good Lord,' is the slave-prayer of one who would escape the results of his sin. The right form of prayer for the conscience-stricken Christian is, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son.' It is no doubt this which was in Dr. Tollinton's mind.

Dr. Gore also objects to Dr. Tollinton as saying that our Lord was mistaken. Dr. Gore points out, and we agree with him, that this is quite another thing from saying that our Lord's

knowledge was limited. But does Dr. Tollinton actually say that our Lord was mistaken? What he says is that the form, not the content, of our Lord's expectation in regard to the future was unfulfilled.

Dr. Gore feels sure that the rejection of miracles by Modernists 'is due to a dogma of philosophy, not really to historical criticism.' This is asserted so often by anti-Modernists that it seems almost vain to contradict it. Yet the well-known case of George Salmon, late Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, seems to furnish evidence against Dr. Gore's view. In his earlier days Salmon preached on *Non-miraculous Christianity*, and held it up to ridicule as an absurdity; but any careful reader of his later *Human Element in the Gospels* can see that his attitude has changed, and that change was brought about by the critical comparative study of the Gospels; and it is this study and not philosophical generalization which in the minds of many modern Biblical students has produced a disbelief in the miraculous. But may we venture to put a question to Bishop Gore about the miraculous? He, beyond all others, has taught us to believe in the limitation of our Lord's knowledge as a necessary condition of the Incarnation. He arrived at that conclusion, not by philosophical speculation, but by studying our Lord's citations of Scripture in the light of the modern conclusions of Old Testament critics. Having perceived the limitation of our Lord's knowledge in this matter, he then came to perceive that such limitation was essential to a true Incarnation. Now, is not our Lord's Divine Omniscience on all fours with His Divine Omnipotence? If a true Incarnation demanded the limitation of His Omniscience, must not a true Incarnation demand a corresponding limitation of His Omnipotence? Hence if our Lord's powers of healing, raising the dead, &c., are strictly human, they are not proofs of Deity. The miraculous *qua* miraculous has in His case ceased to exist. In the Incarnation the first Divine attribute which is seen to be eliminated is Omnipresence, then Omniscience, then Omnipotence. To discover anything superhuman in the human life of our Lord is really to discover a flaw in the Incarnation. Is not this so? If it be so, why trouble further about the miraculous?

We cannot conclude this note without thanking Dr. Gore very heartily for his generous postscript, in which he says:

> 'I have no doubt that those whose position I have tried to describe above have so real a devotion to Christ, that He has for them "the value of God."'

We certainly hold that all those who contributed papers to the Cambridge Conference accept with faith and adoration the supreme unveiling of the Divine Nature in Jesus Christ, and regard the moral and spiritual ideals which He enunciated as demanding the loyalty of moral and spiritual beings always and everywhere. This is to assign to Christ the value of God.

Many other points, which to use Bishop Lightfoot's phrase, are regarded by traditionalists as 'right and tight,' Modernists feel either to be open to question or insoluble, and they are not disposed to think that this matters much.

Pascal asked: 'Which of us believes in that little word, God?' It is not the multiplication of things to be believed in, but the deepening and intensifying of faith in God until it becomes absolute conviction, and the purifying of faith until all false elements are purged from it, which marks real spiritual progress.

The Romanist Attack on the Cambridge Conference.

The sinister ferocity of the Romanist attack on English Modernism will hardly be comprehensible to those who are unacquainted with Roman controversial methods, which unfortunately in their temper are still strangely reminiscent of the Middle Ages, and in their unscrupulousness have little to learn from Machiavelli.

The Tablet, in its issue of August 20th, published, with other criticisms, an article entitled 'The Limit,' which opened as follows:

> 'Our very separated brethren, the Anglicans, have been holding a feast of infidelity at Cambridge. One would have thought that Anglican unbelief had reached its high-water mark in Professor Thompson, the Bishop of Durham, and Dean Inge, but . . .'

This sort of thing must sound strangely in the ears of educated English laymen, and is certainly much below the standard of debate observed to-day by the more cultured clergy of the English Church.

The Romanist Bishop of Salford addressed a Pastoral Letter to the clergy of his see directing that it should be read in the churches on October 2nd. This was published in full in the *Daily Telegraph* and in abbreviated form in the *Manchester Guardian* and other newspapers. Readers of the conference number of the *Modern Churchman* will be interested in comparing the Bishop's manifesto with the general tone and tenor of the conference papers.

'DEAR REV. FATHER—You and the members of your flock will have read with pained surprise in the columns of the Press, during the past few weeks, the deplorable utterances of several learned and influential dignitaries and other ministers of the Anglican Church concerning the Incarnation and Divinity of our Lord, His miracles, His resurrection, the virginity of His blessed mother, and many others of the fundamentals of Christianity. These speakers, especially at the 'Modern Churchmen's Congress' at Cambridge, are reported to have openly proclaimed such teaching as the following:—

'"Jesus did not claim divinity for Himself. He may have allowed Himself to be called the Messiah, but never in any critically well-attested sayings was there anything which suggested that His conscious relations to God were other than that of man towards God."

'Again: "It should be clearly realised that Jesus Himself did not claim in the Gospels to be the Son of God in a physical sense, such as the narratives of the virgin birth suggest. . . He claimed to be God's Son in a moral sense, in the sense in which all human beings are sons of God."

'Another speaker is reported as saying: "We must absolutely jettison the orthodox doctrine that Jesus' personality was not human, but divine. . . . The personality of Jesus was human. He did not think that the assumption in our ecclesiastical interpretation of the Gospels that Christ knew He was God was either justified by the evidence or required by the logic of the doctrine. He did not for a moment suppose that He ever thought of Himself as God."

'The Headmaster of a Public School declared that "he could not doubt that the Jesus of popular belief was largely a mythological figure."

'One's pen almost refuses to transcribe these shocking attacks upon the person and life of our Saviour. I have quoted only a few specimens. We can imagine what damage to souls, especially among those less well grounded in Christian doctrine, must accrue from the broadcast dissemination of such teachings through the Press, with its accompanying promulgation from pulpit and platform. To us Catholics they are, of course, of little moment, and, so long as the Catholic education of our children is secured, will be of little danger. But they do call for something from us who hold irrevocably the Holy Catholic Apostolic Faith.

'To speak plainly, these and similar pronouncements are blasphemies uttered against our Lord and Saviour, God and Man, and against the whole mystery of His incarnation and His atonement. Such publicly uttered blasphemies must surely be most offensive to Almighty God, and likely to draw down His divine wrath upon a nation in which they are given currency and even to a large extent approval. It is, surely, for us Catholics to endeavour to make some reparation to the Divine Majesty

for blaphemies of this nature, by reaffirming publicly and with no uncertain voice our firm and immoveable belief in the great fundamental doctrines thus openly denied, and our intense love and devotion to Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, born of the Virgin Mary, and our Saviour and Judge. For these reasons I hereby direct that in all churches and chapels of the diocese the first Sunday of October (October 2nd), on which is kept the Solemnity of the Feast of the Holy Rosary, be observed this year as a Day of Reparation. Let there be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during the day, with procession at evening service, and let the Litany of the Holy Name be recited at Benediction. Moreover, let it be arranged to have the Rosary, that popular abridgement of the New Testament and profession of faith in all the doctrines of the Incarnation, publicly recited during the day—in some of the larger churches continuously. I beg the clergy also to exhort the faithful to receive Holy Communion at Mass as a personal act of reparation.

'Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.'

'LOUIS CHARLES, Bishop of Salford.'

There is perhaps some excuse for the truculence of the language. The Bishop had recently contributed a paper to the Romanist Congress at Cambridge held in honour of the fifteenth centenary of St. Jerome. Now St. Jerome surpassed his contemporaries in fluency of invective and truculence of temper. If, then, the Bishop seems, making allowance for the milder manners of this age, to rival the saint, let us not blame the Bishop for this, but rather the company that he has been keeping. It is harder, however, to excuse the unscrupulous character of the Bishop's condemnation of the conference. Tennyson has rightly affirmed that a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies, and the practice of quoting striking utterances in such a way as to ignore their qualifying contexts is a form of falsehood which anyone who desired to be regarded as a scholar would hardly care to stoop to. However, there may be an excuse here. We believe that a critical investigation would show that the Bishop has not read the papers from which the citations in his pastoral are made, and so we may charitably assume was unaware of the contexts which qualified his citations. What the nature of that God can be, Whom, the Bishop believes, 'the deplorable utterances' and 'publicly uttered blasphemies' of the Cambridge Conference may induce to visit the English nation with divine wrath, but Who is to be placated by a Day of Reparation and the recitation of the Rosary, we must leave to the consideration of those who are tempted to enter the Roman Church.

But we may ask: What is the reason for the Roman attack? We recall the overpowering indignation of the owners of the Pythian damsel at Philippi, when as the result of the apostolic exorcism, not only was the poor girl delivered, but, as St. Luke adds, 'her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone.' With the advance of English Modernism, the bright hopes which the Romanists have cherished of securing domination over the English Church become increasingly faint. For the last seventy years the Roman Church has been steadily gaining ground in England, but we believe that the days of its advance are numbered. Instead of young English Churchmen in the University of Oxford becoming henceforth, as too readily in the past, a prey to Roman proselytism, we shall see the tables turned, and the students of the new Dominican seminary in St. Giles' kept closely under lock and key to protect them from the ravages of a predatory English Modernism, of which, for all we know, they may find their near neighbour, Pusey House, a powerful *point d'appui*. But the Romanist hopes, if he cannot check Modernism in the English Church by inciting English Churchmen to suppress it, to create such a feeling of alarm in the interval between its advent and its ascendancy, as shall enable him to gather in a large catch of trembling English converts. This is no mere surmise. Cardinal Gasquet, addressing a meeting a few days ago, is reported to have said:

> 'In the next few years they would see a large number of Protestant clergymen drifting into the Roman Catholic Church.
>
> 'The ship of the Anglican establishment was on the rocks, and surely breaking up. High dignitaries of the Established Church were denying the most fundamental doctrines of Christian faith, such as the divinity of Christ. Nobody could be a Christian if he denied that. Although such men still held their emoluments, they were no longer Christians.'

Our Romanist friends will doubtless discover to their great disappointment that the English Church has strong points of likeness to the British Empire. To hostile eyes it may seem to be so loosely organized as to require only one cleverly directed blow to plunge it into dissolution, but experience has proved that it is capable of enduring a pressure which would break highly organized bodies, and that it has hidden sources of vitality and many-sided energy which it only requires a serious crisis to develop.

Every tolerant English Churchman will feel glad that Cardinal Gasquet, Bishop Casartelli, and other members of the Italian Mission to this country are able to minister with acceptance to certain alien or reactionary elements in our population, but we cannot believe that it will ever be possible for Rome to satisfy by her system the moral and spiritual needs of the English nation. The English Church, so it seems to us, if only increasingly loyal to those great ideals of truth, freedom, and tolerance, which we believe to be her hardly won heritage, as they are those of the English race, will in the end be found to be the more serviceable and congenial religious guide of the English people both at home and beyond the seas.

The Bishop of Southwark's Letter.

In pleasing contrast to the Bishop of Salford's episcopal letter is that of the Bishop of Southwark on the Cambridge Conference. It is marked by caution and charity—and this is all the more notable, because the Bishop had not had the opportunity of reading the conference papers. The letter was published in the *Southwark Diocesan Gazette* for this month, and we give it in full.

> 'The views expressed at the Conference of the Liberal Churchman's Union at Cambridge have caused considerable anxiety and perplexity among many. I have been out of England during August, so I have only seen brief summaries of the speeches, it would therefore be unfair for me to express any opinion on the attitude adopted by those who took part in the Conference. But it seems to me that undue importance has been attached to it; it is simply one of the many Conferences held year by year by societies of Churchmen who desire to see how they can best relate the teaching of their Church to the intellectual, social and moral needs of their time. Such gatherings often are of educational value, they tend by conference and debate to form a common mind, in the papers and speeches tentative views are set forth for criticism, they are occasionally both controversial and provocative, but they are more often of the nature of thinking aloud than the expression of final conviction, and as such they should not be regarded as binding on the members of the Society under whose auspices they are made, still less as in any way representative of the teaching of the Church. If the proceedings of Conferences of this nature are to be reported great care should be taken to secure accuracy; real harm and sincere distress may be caused by the scattering broadcast of isolated negative phrases taken out of their context.
>
> 'It would be a serious mistake to discourage free and reverent discussion on the relationship between the results of contemporary thought and the historic faith. From time to time when the Church has been confronted with new modes of thought it has set itself

through its theologians to express and reinterpret its faith in language which is in harmony with the new intellectual outlook and to make plain the true relationship between its doctrines and contemporary knowledge. The Church as the home of truth should welcome truth from whatever quarter it comes. A Church which ignores contemporary thought rapidly loses those who are educated and fails to influence the civilization of its time. In our time new knowledge has been pouring in on every side, no longer is it only the possession of a few highly trained students; through the spread of education, the press and the novel, it has permeated all classes. In the workshop as well as in the University the most thoughtful of the younger men and women are sorely perplexed as to how they can reconcile the new intellectual outlook with the Christian faith. There is thus again a real call for theologians of the Church to reinterpret and to re-express its faith in such a way that without the sacrifice of faith it may make its appeal to the best thought of our time. Frequent attempts have been made to do this, *Lux Mundi* was a notable example, but I think it is a real disadvantage that of late years they should have come mainly from the school of thought which is traditionally "liberal" in its outlook. There is urgent need that the best equipped members of the "Catholic" and "Evangelical" parties should share in the task of stating the theology of our Church in the terms and manner which is most in harmony with all that is best in modern thought. Some will feel that this is unnecessary, the old ways of thought satisfy all their needs, is it not these whom our Lord gently rebukes with the words, "No man having drunk old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith, the old is better."

'It is essential that all attempts at re-statement should conform to two conditions.

'First, it is of vital importance that they should be tested by the Gospels and the Creeds. They must not give us less than we find in them. In their interpretation of the Person of Jesus Christ, they must give us the Incarnate Son of God, Who though Very Man is "God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God." A theology which presents to us the Lord Jesus only as the greatest and holiest among the sons of men is not a re-interpretation at all, for it takes from Christianity its central truth that "The Word was made Flesh" and leaves us with a Man Whom we may reverence and admire instead of a living Lord and Saviour Whom we should worship and serve and Whose life we may share. This is the danger to which attempts at re-statement are open, it can only be guarded against by comparing and testing them again and again with the Christ Who is revealed in the pages of the New Testament, as One Who stands in a special relationship to the Father, Who makes claims for His Person and demands upon His followers such as no man has ever made before or since, Who on the third day rose again from the dead, and Who is acknowledged in the Creeds as God and Saviour.

'Secondly, re-statement must be in harmony with what is assured in the new knowledge, and not with what is a popular but purely momentary phase of thought. The popular welcome of some theory does not prove its stability, it may rapidly be superseded and forgotten. It is a grave disadvantage when some doctrine of the faith has been associated with a philosophy which has been eventually rejected. More than once in the Middle Ages, for example, the theo-

logians in their eagerness to use what was the best thought of their time to express some doctrine adopted the terms of a philosophy subsequently discovered to be untenable, and the living truth they were eager to enshrine has been obscured by the faulty material they employed. To-day the danger is very real, and it is only too easy to welcome as conclusive some results in philosophy, criticism or science which in a few years time will be modified or contradicted.'

Your sincere friend and Bishop,

CYRIL SOUTHWARK.

Perhaps we may venture to remark that all re-statement in terms of contemporary philosophy must needs be temporary, if the progress of the Church be one into all truth, but it does not follow because such re-statement is temporary that it is not needful or ought not to be attempted, especially at a time when the old statements are ceasing to grip the minds of men.

May we also venture to add that it is *History* which presents to us the Lord Jesus 'as the greatest and holiest among the sons of men'; it is *Theology* which presents Him as Deity under human conditions. The functions of the two are distinct, and we get involved in confusion if we mix them.

The Free Churches and the Conference.

The *Manchester Guardian* of September 28th, under the heading 'The Free Churches,' dealt with the Cambridge Conference from the Free Church point of view. We give the following extracts from it, as it does not seem to support the charge that the Cambridge Conference is calculated to retard re-union with the Free Churches.

'Many years ago, at a time when many good people were losing their heads over the publication of the *Vestiges of Creation* and the *Origin of Species,* Dean Church—one of the best and wisest men God ever gave to the English Church—told them that they were writing in much too great a fright and in general behaving "more like old ladies than philosophers." Again, when *Essays and Reviews* threw the whole ecclesiastical world into a ferment, the Dean condemned the book as a reckless book, "but," he went on, "there has been a great deal of unwise panic and unjust and hasty abuse, and people who have not an inkling of the difficulties which beset the questions are for settling them in a summary way, which is perilous to everyone." And yet again, thirty years later, when *Lux Mundi* raised the whole problem of Biblical criticism, Church insisted once more on the need of calmness and patience, and of "a more resolute facing and handling" of the questions which the modern mind inevitably asks.

'It seems worth while to recall these words just now, for the temper which they inculcate is once more being put sharply to the test. The publication of the papers read a few weeks ago at the Modern Churchmen's Conference at Cambridge is awakening the liveliest interest and bids fair to keep tongues and pens busy for many days to come. It is manifestly impossible to write here of the vast and momentous questions of which these papers treat, but I do desire most earnestly to echo Dean Church's plea for calmness and patience. The authors, be it remembered, are not aliens and enemies; they are honoured members and teachers within the Christian Church. They may be mistaken, gravely mistaken: they can be corrected: but at least their aim is Christian, and that alone should be sufficient to protect them from abuse.'

'Now, whether or not we agree with the answers given by the Conference speakers to these questions—and I for one find much in them with which to disagree—we shall all allow that the questions are such as thinking men to-day are bound to ask and, as best they can, to get answered. As everybody knows, they were answered, with great definiteness and confidence, at the Council of Chalcedon nearly fifteen hundred years ago, and the answer then given has remained the orthodox formula ever since. But when we are asked, as one of these essayists asks us, "Will our traditional fellow-Churchmen affirm deliberately that Christological restatement is not permissible, and that it must stop where the Fourth General Council stopped in 451 A.D.?" Free Churchmen at least can make but one reply. What is the worth of the Church's doctrine of the Holy Spirit if it does not teach us to believe that God is as surely with His people to-day to guide them in all truth as He was with those who shaped the great creeds of the early Christian centuries? At the recent Œcumenical Methodist Conference the preacher of the opening sermon put in a brave and timely plea for loyalty to the truth of to-day. Every year, he said, Methodist preachers are asked to declare that they "believe and preach our doctrines." But have we not obligations to-day as well as yesterday to the truth which God is revealing to us now no less than to that which He made known by Wesley? At any rate—and this is the one point which at the moment I am concerned to press,—we need not lose our heads because a few clergymen have been saying some things that some of us never heard before.'

In this connection it may not be amiss to re-affirm that, while a Modernist must regard it as an imperative duty to teach Christian truth in terms of modern knowledge, he cannot in the light of Church history believe that the form in which he is presenting the truth to his own age is either perfect or final. Here 'we know in part': now 'we see through a glass darkly.' No instructed Modern Churchman would therefore hold that the form of Christology adumbrated at the Cambridge Conference is either final or perfect. It has, we believe, contributed something to that which was lacking at Chalcedon. It is a sincere effort to meet some of the difficulties with which the Chalce-

donian Christology is faced by modern knowledge. It does something for some modern Christians that the old Christology does not do. That is all that can be said for it. We look forward to the formulation of a Christology so deep and so comprehensive that but to understand it will be to embrace it. But this can only be in a Church atmosphere in which truth is welcomed, research encouraged, reverent freedom granted.

The Methodists and the Cambridge Conference.

We are inclined to regard the Methodists as pre-eminent among Free Churchmen for their firm adhesion to the traditional Evangelical theology. It was therefore something of a pleasant surprise to observe that the reviewer of the conference number of the *Modern Churchman* in the *Methodist Times* for September 29th, although not in agreement with the general trend of the conference thought, was yet of opinion, as the following extracts indicate, that the conference was justified in its difficult undertaking.

> 'The editor is surely right when he claims that the traditional Christology has no necessary finality. The fact of the incarnation of God in Christ is one thing, the explanation of the mode and conditions under which it came to pass is another. The editor justifies his contention by an argument that should appeal to Methodists.
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> '"It is not ecclesiastical authority, but the growing consciousness of worshipping, practising and thinking Christians which must decide which, if any, of the competing Christologies is to become the dominant one in the Church's Faith. This is a slow process, and in the best sense of that much misused word it is a *democratic* process, and may not rightly be hastened, circumscribed, or usurped by ecclesiastical authority."
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> 'What is wrong with the traditional Christology? The answer is that the doctrine of two natures in one Person is apt to lead to the setting up of two centres of consciousness and two wills in Christ. Even Wesley held that there were some things that Jesus Christ knew as God which He did not know as Man. Such conceptions are not in harmony with modern ideas of personality. Moreover, it is contended that orthodoxy has hardly done justice to the reality of our Lord's humanity. But to ignore His humanity is as real a "heresy" as to deny His divinity. The word incarnation ceases to be applicable if Jesus Christ did not take on Himself our human nature, and that was not possible without self-limitation.
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> 'The speakers at the Modern Churchmen's Conference pursued a fruitful line of thought when they emphasised the kinship between God and man. If the term "substance" must be used, the union of the Divine and Human in Jesus Christ was not that of two incongruous substances, but of two natures that are closely akin, since man is in truth the offspring of God. Along these lines it may be possible to move to a conception of the personality of the God-Man that is not lacking in unity.

'Both Dean Rashdall and Dr. Bethune-Baker asserted that Christ did not claim divinity for Himself. The statement is not new and is not incapable of being controverted, but let that pass. I am content to draw attention to the following passage in Dr. Bethune-Baker's paper:—

'"Jesus was also conscious of 'mission.' He had been chosen by God as the first man to know Him and reveal Him to others and manifest in His own person God's character and purpose by His own life. His sense of mission grew through the course of His own experience more specialised. Nothing was to be allowed to interfere with the fulfilment of this mission. This is a high estimate of self—His significance and His Life—in relation to God and to man and to the world. He has in His own esteem a unique part to play in the ever-moving Drama of the Ages and a central position in the mind and purpose of God."

'If the full implications of this paragraph are drawn out, it seems to me that we are driven to an estimate of Christ indistinguishable from that of the Church Catholic.

'It is possible, and indeed probable, that in coming days much controversy will centre round the Person of Christ. The Church has nothing to fear from the truth, and everything to gain. But it must be the truth. It is to be hoped that the orthodox will keep both their heads and their tempers. There is no advantage in invoking 'bell, book and candle.' If the truth is to advance there must be freedom of discussion. But the obligation to refrain from dogmatism rests on the modernist no less than on the traditionalist. If the Church is ready to follow the guidance of the Spirit she will not lose her way.'

The E.C.U. and the Cambridge Conference.

The English Church Union in a very important gathering held at York in the last week in September, was led to consider a theme which had an important bearing upon the subject of the Cambridge Conference. That theme was, 'Development and its Limitations,' and was introduced by Prof. C. H. Turner. The best summary we have seen of the paper appeared in the *Church Times* of September 30th, and we venture to reproduce it here with some immaterial omissions.

'Dr. Turner pointed out that the term *Development* hardly goes back beyond the publication of Cardinal Newman's famous treatise, "The Development of Christian Doctrine" in 1845. It was a result of the historical spirit which marked the last century off from all those that had preceded it. "Development is neither a bogey to be frightened of nor a magical charm and talisman to save us trouble, but the symbol of a new method." In the Christian religion as elsewhere there were two fundamental elements—the element of stability and the element of progress. How is the fixed element to condition and control the element of movement? Dr. Turner showed in reply to that question what had been done in the first instance in the history of the definition of the Person of our Lord—Christology. If the Creed of Nicæa had been presented to any ordinary Greek-speaking Christian of the first days of the infant Church of Jerusalem he would

have found it quite unintelligible; it would have been cast in terms which meant nothing to him. Development was clearly at work. This was realised by the controversies of the counter-Reformation—the French Jesuit father, Petavius (Denys Peteau), realised this, and was inclined to exaggerate the differences between the Nicene and the anti-Nicene theologians. George Bull, then an Anglican parish priest, a generation or two later took up the question, not as against Petavius, but against the Unitarians. Neither writer was completely satisfactory. Then Newman, greater than either, took up the problem, but even he did not, perhaps could not in the state of historical criticism when he wrote, face the problem which concerns us most—the Divinity of our Lord.

'One method by which development has historically proceeded has been by taking statements felt to be defective and working them out to their explicit conclusions. Thus without Arius there would have been no Creed of Nicæa.

'The speaker made a valuable point when he showed that as definition progresses it is paid for at a price. "The air is something heavier in the fourth century than it had been in the second and third, It is heavier still as the centuries go on," and, further, a truth defined in a formula is apt, as a result of the struggle, to be held out of proportion to other and complementary truths. So development needs to be tested at every turn by the standard of earlier times, by the tradition of the Church, primarily the written tradition of the New Testament scriptures and the unwritten spontaneous tradition of the first ages.

'It has been a weakness in the Anglican position both as against Rome and as against Modernism that it has tended to try to draw what must seem an arbitrary line. "We must find room in our theology for the possibility of development," perhaps in unexpected directions.'

The paper was summarized by Dr. Frere as follows:

'(1) That development was irresistible, though it had been perceived only in the nineteenth century; (2) that the supreme revelation was in our Lord, but that development consisted in our drawing out that revelation; (3) that development had to be watched, and that danger came from two sets of people—the intellectualists and the emotionalists—and that we have been more afraid of the intellectualists than of the emotionalists; (4) that the method of testing was really the Anglican basis—*viz.*, Holy Scripture and the history of the Primitive Church.'

If this statement may be taken to represent the considered attitude of the organized Anglo-Catholics, there is profound reason to believe that we shall achieve re-union within the English Church. It constitutes a great advance upon, what appeared to us, the hopeless position taken up by the first Anglo-Catholic Congress held last year in London, when the Rev. N. P. Williams, dealing with the official position of the Anglo-Catholics on Authority and Belief, appealed to the doctrines and practice of the undivided Church before 1054 A.D.

Whilst we believe ourselves to be entirely in agreement with Prof. Turner's paper as summarized by Dr. Frere, we are not sure that we regard (4) as adequate. We think that we must add to Holy Scripture not merely 'the history of the Primitive Church,' but 'the history of the whole Church,' or else better still add a third test, 'the growing consciousness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit of worshipping, practising and thinking Christians.'

The Congregationalists and the Creeds.

At the Autumnal Assembly of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, the Chairman on October 4th dealt with the Lambeth proposals for re-union, particularly in relation to doctrinal freedom. He said:

> 'It was because they as Congregationalists held it to be a form of loyalty to truth to keep an open mind, and because they knew that God's truth must always be greater than any statement of it, that they declined to make a creed for themselves; and for the same reason they declined to accept any that had been made. When propositions concerning the Divine Nature and operations were presented to them they could not accept them solely on the authority of those by whom they were drawn—not because they disparaged authority, but because they reverenced the truth too much to identify its substance with the thoughts of men about it. When creeds were used as tests of Christian faith and character they denied their validity; when they were proposed as essentials to a true fellowship in Christ they drew upon their own experience and knew that they were unnecessary. It seemed to some of them, therefore, that when they were presented with a proposal of reunion which made an ancient creed a *sine qua non*, they were not only asked to accept a creed, but to surrender a great faith and depart from an ancient witness. To most of them a creed was like a piece of gold-bearing quartz—it combined precious metal and common stone. These might be separated, but only by scholarship, experience, and the logic of events. For the fine gold they were thankful, and they reverently used it to enrich their offering to the Lord. So long as it was asserted that unquestioning obedience to a Church was of the essence of religion, they must persevere with their testimony that the free man could be religious too.
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> 'They held that ecclesiastical authority and Church creeds were not necessary to an abiding and valid testimony to the power of the Gospel. As in a nation, so in religion, the ultimate truth was not in authority or in liberty, but in a greater truth which comprehended them both. History showed how authority, unchecked by liberty, tended to become tyranny, and how liberty, uncontrolled by authority, tended to license; and when they were invited to become members of a fellowship based on authority their way was not clear. With them liberty was not only a faith and a principle; it was an atmosphere, and an atmosphere in which the best things grew. With them

the test of religion was not the acceptance of a creed, but the production of a Christ-like character. Liberty required them to believe that the final test of any Church was in the kind of men and women it produced. It had sometimes been suggested that the liberties their fathers fought for had been completely won, and that they need no longer maintain their separate witness. But it was not so, nor would it be so until in the sphere of religion there was a complete and universal recognition of the equal validity of authority and liberty in the Christian life.'

We are convinced that there is a growing body within the Anglican Communion who are in favour of these principles. The practical problem is how to secure re-union without infringing them. We believe that a reformed Church of England is yet going to show the world how to reconcile unity with nonconformity, and continuity with progress. But the demonstration will be practical, not logical, and some little time is necessary for experiment.

Two Letters on Miracles.

Canon Peter Green, who criticized the Cambridge Conference speakers with some severity in the *Church Times* and *Manchester Guardian*, drew in the latter paper two interesting letters from local members of the Churchmen's Union, which we give in full.

SIR,

'Artifex's' article is so conciliatory that one hardly cares to criticise, yet two points call for attention.

1. 'Artifex' does not believe that 'the bulk of Christians desire a revision of the Creeds.' Of course not. They are not in a position to understand, still less to criticise, the details of those formulæ. Their criticism, or their lack of it, is not what the Churchmen's Union is concerned with. What concerns us is what the specialists, historical, anthropological, philosophical, say of the Creeds; for we know that, in the end, opinion, even general opinion, is formed by the specialists.

2. 'Artifex' suggests that our suspicion of 'the miraculous' reflects an attitude characteristic of the 19th century and now obsolete. But if he would look at the report of our conference last year, when our subject was 'The relation between modern knowledge and traditional Christianity,' he would see that we are quite alive to recent developments in physics, biology, and psychology. But the circumstance that the tyranny of physics, with its narrow, abstract, jejune interpretation of all phenomena, is past, does not involve us in the old subjection to mediæval notions. Would representative exponents of the new biology like J. S. Haldane, J. A. Thomson, Driesch, Bergson, and others, or experts in the new psychology, subscribe to the views of the miraculous of Dr. Liddon? The hope is vain. The new knowledge cannot be thus exploited in the interests of obscurantism. 'Miracle' in the old and traditional sense of the word conveys an obsolete notion. That phenomena described (quite rightly from one point of view) as 'miraculous' have occurred and do

occur is not to be disputed, but these phenomena are no longer 'miracles' in the old sense. Our categories have changed. They will change again; but the transformation will not satisfy the expectations of traditionalists.

J. C. HARDWICK.

SIR,

In the interests of truth may I utter a protest against the article by 'Artifex' under this head? I protest because I believe this article is calculated to give an utterly wrong impression to those who are not acquainted with the principles of modern Churchmen.

'Artifex' pretends that modern Churchmen are not modern enough. Though he does not actually say so, he would naturally lead one to suppose they desire to eliminate the miraculous *quâ* miraculous. This is not true. What they claim is not only the right but the necessity that the New Testament be subjected to historic criticism by scientific methods. They do not reject miracle *quâ* miracle, but demand that the evidence for events which seem to be outside the natural order be thoroughly tested like any other evidence on scientific principles. Of these principles one of the most important is that in weighing evidence for an event apparently miraculous we must take into consideration the predisposition and the wish of the testators to see and believe in the miraculous, and also the fact that we cannot attach the same importance to a miracle attested by ignorant and superstitious men in an ignorant and superstitious age as we should to one attested by trained observers. Does 'Artifex' admit this? If so, why ignore it? It is no use evading it, for this consideration is vital. No doubt 'Artifex' is right when he implies that twentieth-century thought has a wider view of the possibility of events which seem to contradict the natural order of things than the agnostics of the nineteenth century had, but at the same time the twentieth century demands satisfactory evidence for them just as much if not more than the nineteenth, since the average man is more educated, and the historical method of criticism has gained and is gaining a firmer foothold.

Again, the question is not merely one of the evidence of the miraculous, but rather the desirability of making belief in it the primary basis for the faith. In other words, are we to stress the acceptance of the miraculous element in Christianity in preference to the acceptance of its moral code, inseparable as that is from certain theological conceptions? Was the One who said 'Not everyone that saith unto Me "Lord, Lord," shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven' likely to prefer literal belief to moral conduct on the principles which He Himself laid down so clearly?

GERARD VEERMAN.

There is one writer, Wendland, who it seems to us treats the vexed question of the miraculous in such a way as to secure the agreement of both modernists and traditionalists. He does not treat it physically or historically, but psychologically. He who understands Wendland will come to recognize how the values of the miraculous can find a place in the faith of a Modernist. The book is translated into English, and every modern student of the miraculous ought to be acquainted with it.*

* *Miracles and Christianity*, by J. Wendland (Hodder).

THE CHELTENHAM CONFERENCE

By the Rev. W. A. Cunningham Craig, M.A., Vicar of St. Sepulchre's, Holborn Viaduct.

THE sixth Cheltenham Conference possesses a special interest for Modern Churchmen.

Cheltenham has strong, one might almost say uncompromising Evangelical traditions. Its churches and many of its institutions are the creation of the Evangelical party in its palmy days. Its slightly artificial atmosphere seems to harmonise with a phase of religious feeling, once fashionable, but now more or less out of date. This is the background of the Conference. The present rector, Canon H. A. Wilson, belongs to the younger and more Liberal school of Evangelicals. He is loyal to its traditions, yet eager for advance. Like Aaron, he stands 'between the dead and the living.' Since his institution about seven years ago, he has issued invitations to annual Conferences of Evangelical Churchmen—clerical and lay—and has himself presided over their deliberations with unfailing tact, firmness and charm. These conferences have been notable gatherings, and have done much to influence thought among the Evangelical party, especially on such subjects as Re-union and Church Reform. From the outset a definite line has been taken on the subject of pulpit interchange and inter-communion, from which the conference has never wavered. Equally clear has been its opposition to the idea of requiring anything in the nature of re-ordination as a condition of re-union with the non-episcopal Churches.

At this year's conference a remarkable experiment was made. The relation of Evangelical Churchmen to other schools of thought in the Church was boldly faced, and two representatives of the Anglo-Catholic and two of the Liberal school were invited to address the conference at successive sessions. It has often been a reproach to Evangelical Churchmen that they have held aloof from those from whom they

differed, and have failed to understand any point of view except their own. The same thing might perhaps be said of Catholics and Liberals as well. At any rate, the experiment made this year at Cheltenham could not fail to be interesting, and the meeting together, within four walls and on the same day, of representatives of the three great schools of thought in the English Church for a free and frank interchange of views, if not quite an unique, was certainly an unusual occurrence.

At the afternoon session of Tuesday, September 27th, the conference was addressed by Rev. M. E. Atlay, Vicar of St. Matthew's, Westminster, and Rev. G. H. Clayton, Vicar of St. Mary-the-Less, Cambridge. Both deplored the lack of unity within the Church of England, and both seemed anxious to arrive at a closer understanding and co-operation between its different sections. Both admitted that this lack of unity must be a fatal barrier to wider schemes of re-union. But neither was able to offer any very practical suggestion as to how this was to be overcome. It was not very helpful to be told that we had a bond of union in the Book of Common Prayer, since it is just here that the differences begin to show themselves. The statement is either commonplace or camouflage. It leaves matters exactly where they were. It would not be fair to ascribe this to any want of frankness on the part of the speakers, but yet the real issues were never fully brought to light either in their addresses or in the subsequent discussion. The spirit and tone were excellent, but the two sides seemed to be too far apart to reach any fruitful understanding.

In the evening it was different. An extraordinary change came over the atmosphere of the conference. The papers of Canon Glazebrook and Mr. Emmet were listened to with rapt attention. Their high spiritual tone and frank sincerity seemed for the moment to disarm criticism and to sweep the conference off its feet. The short discussion that followed hardly struck a note of discord. There was on the part of most of the speakers a real appreciation of the position of Liberal Churchmen, though they naturally fell short of full agreement. It was in many respects a wonderful meeting. Speakers and audience were moved as they had not been in the afternoon.

The last session of the conference on the following morning was devoted to a discusion of the findings. It was held behind closed doors, and it would be neither right nor fair to disclose what took place. But the findings themselves are made public, and from them one may infer something of the nature of the deliberations. They are as follows:

I. Church Government.

(1) The Conference thankfully and loyally accepts the measures for Church self-government already passed by the National Assembly.

(2) The Conference, however, urges the restoration of the words originally standing in Section 3 of the Further Powers Measure, requiring that conference shall take place between the Incumbent and the Church Council when any important change in the conduct of Divine Service is proposed.

(3) It is, moreover, strongly of opinion that no executive body should be set up within any diocese on which the laity are not adequately represented.

II. Patronage.

(1) The Conference desires to place on record its belief that the variety of forms of patronage within the Church of England has been of great value in securing to the Church the services of useful men of diverse types.

(2) It deprecates the formation of Diocesan Patronage Boards as substitutes for all other forms of patronage, believing that they would tend to produce a stereotyped uniformity within each diocese.

(3) It further recommends that small Trusts should co-operate to form larger bodies on a public basis, and that on the occurrence of a vacancy in any particular parish, representatives (but not more than two) of the parish in question should be co-opted as assessors to the Trust responsible for the appointment.

III. Church Union.

(1) The Conference accepts with heartfelt thankfulness the Appeal and Resolutions of the Lambeth Conference on the subject of Church Re-union as a great advance towards the attainment of that ideal.

(2) It urges all Evangelical Churchmen to strive to educate public opinion in favour of closer union with other Churches; and believes that occasional interchange of pulpits would be a valuable means to this end.

(3) Since mutual intercommunion is an obvious aid to re-union, it must continue to press for fuller recognition of this right, implicitly admitted by Resolution 12 B. (ii) of the Lambeth Conference, 1920, as already existing in exceptional cases.

(4) While recognising the importance of commissioning non-Anglican clergy before authorizing them to officiate in our churches, it emphatically reaffirms its previous conviction that such commission should not involve anything which might be considered to be re-ordination, or reflect upon the 'spiritual reality' of their previous ministry 'as effective means of grace.'

(5) It attaches great importance to the inquiry by the World Conference on Faith and Order into the nature of a united Church and its relation to the Bible and the Creeds.

IV. Unity within the Church.

(1) The Conference reaffirms its belief in the essential Deity and true humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ; in the unique Inspiration of Holy Scripture as the record of God's revelation to man and its supreme authority in matters of doctrine and conduct; in the priesthood of every believing Christian; in the atonement of our Lord 'by His one oblation of Himself once offered' as a 'full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world'; and in the privilege of direct access of the human soul to God through Jesus Christ.

(2) It recognises the sincerity of men whose object it is to bring people into vital touch with the living Christ, even though their methods may be different from those of Evangelical Churchmen. It recognises also the right of free inquiry and investigation in regard to all matters affecting religious belief, and declares its sympathy with all reverent attempts to interpret the Divine revelation so that it may be brought home to the hearts and minds of men and women in our own age. It realises that the force of the witness of the Church and the prospects of reunion with other Christian bodies is impaired by divisions within the Church itself.

(3) Accordingly, it urges the duty of examining fully the viewpoints of other schools of thought within the Church, and in particular of discovering the measure of agreement which may exist between them and Evangelical Churchmen.

(4) The Conference, while earnestly desiring to promote Christian unity and the things that make for peace, is compelled to affirm its conviction that no true and lasting unity can exist where fundamental contradiction in matters of doctrine remain unreconciled, and that effective co-operation in conveying the Christian message requires agreement at least as to the nature and content of the message to be given.

(5) It is, however, strongly of opinion that wherever possible there should be co-operation in matters which lie outside the particular points of divergence.

These findings are an attempt to express the general mind of the conference rather than the verdict of a mere majority. They are the largest measure of common agreement

that can be reached. Great care is taken in their drafting and revision. On reading them it becomes clear that there must have been some misgivings which did not find utterance at the previous sessions of the conference. Perhaps a night's reflection had produced a reaction in some quarters. The doctrinal statements on the findings clearly mark the difference between Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics on the one hand, and the Liberals on the other. Side by side with these, however, there is the frank recognition that different methods may be used by different men, and that some measure of freedom of investigation and statement must be allowed. At the same time it is stipulated that a certain amount of agreement as to the content of the Christian revelation is a necessary condition of effective co-operation, though the exact amount of agreement is not defined.

It may be admitted at once that these findings fall short of what some of us had hoped for, but perhaps they are the most that was possible at the time. On the whole we may welcome them as a step towards a better understanding, and perhaps the beginning of a closer drawing together of those who are at present divided. Good seed was sown on these days at Cheltenham, and in due time there will be a harvest. One further point may be recorded. The large number of members of the conference who carried in their hands copies of the conference number of the *Modern Churchman* was very noticeable. It was clear that the papers read at Cambridge were being carefully studied by the younger Evangelical clergy. There was much criticism in private conversation. There were some deep searchings of heart. But these things are good. The Cambridge Conference has stirred the thought of the Church as nothing has done for a long time. It cannot fail to have an influence not only among Liberals, but among Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals as well. It has put Modern Churchmanship in the first line of the Church's battle and supplied something of which, I think it is true to say, all parties in the Church stood in need.

AN EIRENICON TO THE EVANGELICALS*

By Canon M. G. Glazebrook, D.D.

MOST new movements in the region of philosophy and religion come into conflict with some received opinions, and superficial observers are apt to assume that their main tendency is destructive. Liberal Churchmen have been in a special degree the victims of such misunderstanding. Allow me, therefore, to begin by protesting that ours is very far from being a spirit of negation. The charges against us are mainly due to our more logical and constructive application of three principles which are formally accepted by all Churchmen, but are rarely allowed to have free play. These are:

(*a*) That all truth forms a unity.

(*b*) That revelation is progressive, and therefore religious knowledge is relative.

(*c*) That faith is of higher value than belief.

(*a*) All Christians agree in believing the universe to be rational. That is, as the manifestation of one divine mind, it must be consistent with itself, and as such intelligible to other minds. For the apprehension and formulation of truth man has only one instrument, his God-given reason: and therefore his methods of dealing with all kinds of truth are essentially the same. What we all call knowledge is a joint product of experience and reason. Experience gives us the material, which reason formulates in such a way that it becomes available for the purposes of life. If that is true of chemical laws, it is not less true of Church dogmas. They were built up out of given material—whether tradition, revelation, or observation—by a slow process of reasoning: it is because they satisfied the reason of theologians in the fourth century that they attained a place in

* An address delivered at the Cheltenham Evangelical Conference.

the formularies: and they have held their place because theologians in successive generations have commended them to the reason of their contemporaries as consistent with the recognized order of the universe. In the present day, as in the fourth century and the sixteenth, it is our duty to reconcile, as far as may be, the different aspects of truth which present themselves to us, new and old, religious and scientific, philosophical and historical. And if we believe in the ultimate unity of all truth, we shall be bold to face all apparent difficulties.

(*b*) However firmly we believe in the unity and absolute character of truth, we cannot deny that men have conceived and presented the same truths very differently in different ages. That which any generation has taken to be knowledge has been largely the product of its own mentality, and to that extent was destined to change with the change of thought and language. There is therefore a fundamental fallacy involved in two often quoted phrases of the later New Testament epistles: 'Guard the deposit' and 'The faith once delivered to the saints.' This 'deposit' is further defined as 'the form of sound words.' Rarely can a form of words be permanently sound: for the thought which it expresses is relative to a particular generation, and the form of expression which seems exact to one age seems to a later age only approximate, if not actually misleading. Absolute truth, indeed, may well be compared to a pearl, which is unchangeable in aspect and value: but most man-made formulas rather resemble the Ciro pearls, whose duration is uncertain and their value conventional.

Revelation, therefore, is progressive in a double sense. We all recognize that the great prophets of the world have raised the edifice of religious knowledge step by step, each building upon the foundation of his predecessor. But we do not always bear in mind the correlative truth that what each prophet gave to his generation was just what it was able to receive. It is with spiritual as with material food. Meat is useless to us unless we digest it; that is, unless it is so far modified by the existing juices of the body as to become nourishment. So from new teaching men gain only so much as they can assimilate; that is, bring into relation with their existing system of ideas. What is unintelligible passes away from the mind and leaves no trace.

But happily in some cases the actual words of the prophet have been preserved and written down. Then they come to each fresh generation as in some sense a new revelation: and often a later age can assimilate more than the earlier, because the new knowledge acquired in other spheres has thrown light upon words which to an earlier age were dark. So a single group of facts and words, unchanged themselves, may be the source of a progressive revelation.

May we not sum all this up in some words of our Lord Himself? 'The Kingdom of God is like to a grain of mustard seed.' Truth for man is not a lifeless treasure, passed from hand to hand, but a tree which grows out of a seed once planted, adapting itself to soil and climate, and expanding until it can invite all the dwellers under heaven to enjoy its shade.

(*c*) We whose conception of religious truth is dynamic sometimes find ourselves opposed, in important matters of belief, to those Churchmen whose conception is static. Yet we do not feel that such differences make a very deep division between us and them. For differences of *belief* do not necessarily involve a difference of *faith*: and it is faith which is the cardinal fact of religious life. The two things are often confused, because the Greek language has only one noun for them both — πίστις —and English only one verb—believe. But there is no such confusion in the writings of St. Paul and St. James and the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. The examples of faith offered in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews are all instances of love and trust in God, not of assent to propositions. No belief is associated with their faith, except that God 'exists, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.' St. James mentions the idea that belief can save only to condemn it as irreligious. And the saving faith, which is central in St. Paul's teaching, is not a belief in historical or other statements, but a perfect trust in God, which bears fruit in conduct. The faith by which we live, which gives us our worth as moral and spiritual beings, is a state of mind and character—the spirit of adoption (to use St. Paul's phrase) whereby we recognize God as our Father, manifest in Christ, and desire to do His will. If that be so, faith may be associated in different men's minds with various beliefs about historical events and with various metaphysical

conceptions, and yet may animate them all alike, teaching them to live as sons of God and brothers in Christ. Beliefs are the golden setting which is meant to secure and to enhance the jewel of faith: but their value and their permanence are of a lower order than the jewel itself.

These three principles—the unity of truth, the relativity of religious knowledge, and the supreme value of faith—determine the attitude of Liberal Churchmen to traditional authority, as embodied in the Bible, the Church, and the Creeds.

(1) The strict theory of an infallible book, verbally inspired, to which the Evangelical school was still pledged some fifty years ago, has now few adherents. It is common ground for us all that there are, at least in the Old Testament, many mistakes as to matters of fact, and several different levels of moral and theological teaching. The difference between Evangelicals and ourselves is not as to the existence of these features, but as to the right way of regarding them. While the former seem to admit their presence with regret, as detracting from the worth and dignity of the sacred volume, we recognize them as the hall marks of truth, stamped upon a record which, while naively human, is divinely illuminating. We read in the Old Testament a dramatic and inspiring story of the way in which Israel—the type of all religious nations—sought after God and found Him, first in lower forms, then in higher, and so approached the highest. We welcome the fruits of that patient scholarship which, by a curious misnomer, is called the higher criticism, because it presents this story for the first time in a shape which is really intelligible and consistent. We are not troubled by the evidences of inaccurate narrative, of obsolete ideas of natural law, or of contradictory notions of morality; because such imperfections are inseparable from a growing knowledge, which in each stage is relative to a particular generation. In the books of the prophets, to which we assign their rightful primacy, we see the most signal instances of what is the normal process of revelation: for we find them leading their people upward, step by step, from polytheism to monolatry, from monolatry to a pure monotheism, and at the same time elevating their standards of moral duty. This shining example, we believe, throws light upon the whole of human

history, so that everywhere we can trace God's patient and gradual teaching, received with man's ever conservative protest that there is no new truth, but reform is only a return to forgotten tradition. Such a treatment of the Old Testament, at once positive, constructive, and scientific, removes many of the stumbling blocks which used to wound the consciences of thoughtful readers, or turn them to unbelief. For he who reads the Bible as the record of a gradual revelation is not even tempted to reconcile the diverse teaching of different ages. For him the affable deity who walks with Abraham, the fierce tribal god who fights for Israel, the righteous but partial champion whom Isaiah invokes, and the transcendent ruler of all the world to whom deutero-Isaiah points upwards, are all consistent when regarded as steps in the ascent which leads up to the God of love Who is revealed in Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament we see the crown of the Old Testament—the record of that divine life for which the whole course of Israel's history prepared the way. The books of the New Testament, written within a period of about fifty years, and referring to events not long past, are naturally more accurate in narration and more uniform in conception. Yet even here we recognize the evidences of relativity, and that in two forms. The narrative is coloured by some preconceptions common to the age and nation, such as the mistaken exegesis of Scripture, the belief that diseases were caused by devils, and the lack of any conception of natural law. But while we observe and allow for such relativity, we do not lose our faith in the substantial truth of the records of which it forms an element. Again, relativity is manifest in the difference of doctrine which is obvious to all who compare the Gospels of St. Mark and St. John. The former records in the main the naive conceptions of the earliest disciples: the latter embodies the results which were attained in seventy years of strenuous thought and illuminating experience. Each of the pictures which these Gospels present of the Lord's personality has its own truth: but the points of view from which they are taken are so different that we need help in passing from one to the other. It is St. Paul who comes to our aid: for in his epistles we can trace the progressive interpretation of the life and person of Jesus Christ. Seeing

how he fitted the divine portrait first into a frame of purely Hebrew thought, with the title of Messiah, and later into a frame wrought from the Jewish Alexandrian philosophy, which presented Him as the Wisdom or the Word of God, we feel that the chief of the apostles has, by his example, authorised the successive efforts of theologians to interpret Jesus to their contemporaries in terms of the thought of their own age. That has always been, and must remain, the central problem for Christian teachers. In so far as they take St. Paul for their model, they will ever use the best science and philosophy of their time as searchlights to illuminate that gracious Figure for the eyes of their fellow-men.

(2) The theory of an infallible Church, founded by our Lord Himself, organized in accordance with His commands, and endowed with the power to bind and to loose, is the special property of the Church of Rome, which claims the monopoly of that commission. Various modifications of that theory are, indeed, put forward by other Churches, but their logical foundations are unsound. On what, then, can we Anglicans base a system of Church authority? The answer seems to be supplied by modern historical science, which gives an account of the Church's origin very different from the old tradition, and far more consistent with what the Bible teaches about God's providential government.

The Synoptic Gospels agree in affirming that Jesus taught His disciples to expect His second Advent in their own lifetime: and St. Paul's earlier epistles prove that their minds were possessed by this expectation. How, then, can we suppose that He designed to found a permanent society, equipped with a regular order of ministers? To do so would have been quite inconsistent. St. Paul, until after his second missionary journey, preached that the end of the world was imminent. It was only in his last few years, when that expectation had faded, that he made plans for organizing a Church which should endure. But in truth neither foundation nor plans were necessary. The foundation had been laid long before in the Jewish Church, from which the main idea of a Catholic Church is directly inherited. Plans were not required; for the Christian Church was the natural, the inevitable, sequel to the revelation

of Christ. The brotherhood of the disciples, instinct with vital force, showed itself to be an organic growth, which adapted itself to its environment. The history of the episcopate, for example, which has taken so many forms and yet preserved a real continuity, is at once a testimony to the wisdom which guided the Church through many centuries, and a contradiction of the idea that its order was determined once for all by the Founder's authority. So with other elements of the Church's constitution. We can see the whole being built up, under a divine impulse, by human hands out of existing materials. We see, too, how the structure became too rigid under the influence of human logic, and therefore broke up under the force of human temperament. East separates from West, Northern Europe from Southern, Presbyterian from Episcopalian. A lamentable division, if we believe that Christ ordained a single and uniform body; but otherwise natural, and in many respects beneficial to the cause of true religion. Who can say what might have happened if the Church in Europe had been irrevocably linked with that of the decadent Eastern Empire?

At any rate the divisions, which existed earlier, have been formally acknowledged since the eleventh century, and show no sign of being healed. Where, then, is now the authority of the Church? Some reply that it resides in the doctrine and decisions of the undivided Church during the first four or six or ten centuries of its existence. That assertion is open to two obvious criticisms. In the first place a Church is more than a code. No collection of decisions can govern without a living power to interpret and enforce them. In the second place we must consider what were the qualifications of the undivided Church for making decisions of permanent validity. The last three centuries of its millennium were a period of almost unparalleled intellectual darkness and moral corruption. If trees are known by their fruit, any one of the branches into which the Church is now divided is in a sounder state than a large part of the parent trunk. From the first five or six centuries, indeed, we may learn much. But no one who has studied the Fathers can fail to see that their modes of thought are quite inadequate to deal with the larger problems of our time. They did well to present truth as they apprehended it in the lan-

guage of their own time: but why should we suppose that they had authority to pronounce for all the future? No reason is assigned except the assumption that the Holy Spirit would assist the deliberations of the Church only so long as it remained nominally united. To us that assumption seems nothing less than profane. Surely the advance in knowledge and improvements in methods of reasoning which distinguish the last hundred years, and which have thrown so much light upon the sphere of theology, prove that the Divine Spirit is still present to aid, giving to each Church all that it is able and willing to receive.

The authority, then, of the Catholic Church is not that of an institution, but that of an ideal, which creates an atmosphere but enacts no laws. Such practical, positive, limited authority as is required in order that men may live in unity and join in worship, is exercised by the branch Churches over their own members. Each of these has a quality of its own. Its doctrines and institutions are derived in part from the Bible, in part from a tradition which embodies past thought and experience, in part from the thought and experience of the present. For its own members it must be *the* Church. They must accept its doctrine and discipline in the broad sense: for Christianity is essentially a brotherhood, and to be a member of no Church is practically to cease to be a Christian.

(3) I have to some extent anticipated what has to be said about the application of our three principles to the creeds, so I can be brief. The reader of a paper at last year's Anglo-Catholic Congress asserted that 'the historic development of Christian doctrine was so guided and inspired by the heavenly assistance of the Holy Spirit, that the Catholic Creeds and conciliar definitions may be relied upon as representing the nearest approach to absolute truth which finite minds are capable of apprehending.' Part of what I have said already seems to me to invalidate that assertion. But the position of Liberal Churchmen will be made clearer if I add a few words of definite criticism.

Every reader of Church history knows that what we commonly call the Nicene Creed, but is really an expanded form of a cognate creed, adopted in 451 A.D., was the outcome of three

centuries of controversy, which was always acrimonious and sometimes bloody. It was largely based upon some earlier Rules of Faith, which were of Greek origin, and produced in a society whose dominant philosophy was Neo-Platonism. The Nicene Creed itself contains phrases which are almost identical with the language of Plotinus. Again, the conception of the material world which that creed implies belongs to early Greek science—a flat earth, the centre of the universe; a solid vault of heaven over-arching it; and heavenly bodies of moderate size revolving between that vault and the earth. Again, the Biblical exegesis is also that of the early centuries. The clause 'rose again according to the Scriptures' assumes the accuracy of the statements, which more than once is put forward in the Acts, that certain texts of the Old Testament foretold the Resurrection. Yet the hardiest of apologists to-day will scarcely venture to maintain that those texts can bear the interpretation which St. Luke puts upon them.

What more complete proof could be desired that the Nicene Creed was relative to the age which produced it? Admirable as an interpretation of essential truths in language adapted to the mentality of the fourth century, how can it be regarded as 'the nearest possible approach to absolute truth' by men who recognize that its philosophy is obsolete, its science superseded, and its exegesis unhistorical? No less admirable is the later form of creed which was adopted by the Council of Chalcedon. But for the invasions of the barbarians, which soon put an end to constructive religious thought, there would doubtless have been a long series of such Councils, which would in their turn have interpreted the faith to successive generations. What gave to that creed its sacro-sanct character was not a reasoned conviction that finality had been attained, but the seven centuries of darkness in which men forgot the possibility of restatement.

The re-interpretation which, under happier conditions, Councils might have accomplished openly, has been in part effected unobserved by changes in the meaning of language. The identical words of the creed do not call up the same images for us as for their authors, because the atmosphere is changed. But there are some phrases to which time has given no new

colour. 'Light of light,' for instance, had a definite meaning for a disciple of Plotinus: but what does it mean for us? The Church disclaims both the doctrines, of emanation and of subordination, which the phrase was coined to express. Yet if we substitute another meaning, it must be on our private responsibility: for no authority has offered us any guidance. A similar problem arises out of the historical clauses. 'Descended into hell,' in its liberal sense, has no meaning for anyone who accepts the established results of astronomy and geology.

Liberal Churchmen differ from others chiefly in trying to face such questions instead of ignoring them. We hold that to let a difficulty slide is the surest way to aggravate it. As a provisional measure, therefore, we claim the right of symbolical interpretation in those cases where the literal statement conflicts—we dare not say with absolute knowledge, but —with the best conception which our generation has attained of historical and scientific facts, and the most assured principles of philosophy. Thus we believe ourselves to be paving the way for some new Council of Faith and Order which may do for the twentieth century what the Council of Nicaea did for the fourth.

What may we hope that such a Council will accomplish? Obviously it must try to bring each of the three sections of the creed into relation with the vaster universe to which 1,600 years have opened to the eyes of men, and with the philosophical principles which have become part of the common heritage. But like the Council of Nicaea it must devote its main effort to the subject which, now as in the fourth century, is the centre of debate. It must interpret Jesus Christ anew to our generation: it must find language to indicate—or rather, to adumbrate—the truth about His person, His life, and His atonement.

The old formulas have ceased to satisfy the instructed, and to the uninstructed they convey no meaning. Yet never were men more ready to receive the knowledge of Christ, if expressed in terms which they can understand: never has His central importance in the history of the world been more generally acknowledged: never has there been better reason to hope that a common devotion to Christ may draw men together into

a real brotherhood: never was it more certain that no other foundation has been laid for the peace of mankind.

Indeed, men are being drawn together by the love of Christ, in spite of diversity in their conceptions of His nature. Surely, as they come nearer to each other in obedience to His law and following His example, unity of faith must promote unity of belief. May we not apply to this hope some words which He is said to have spoken in another connection: 'If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching?' With such a hope to hearten and to solemnize them, surely all who love and worship the same Saviour, Revealer, and Lord, may even now live together as brothers whom charity binds closer than definitions, and whom diversity of beliefs cannot divorce from the unity of their faith.

Diversity of beliefs and practices can never cease entirely. For men's conceptions of truth and their choice of rules and ceremonies are relative, not merely to the age in which they live, but also to their temperament and education. The more frankly we recognize these causes of difference, the easier it is to live in concord with others, the less we are tempted to impose our own views and practices upon them. History shows that there are many paths by which men can approach the Lord. Far be it from us to close any of them. All our claim is that we may be allowed to follow our own path which, in leading us to the centre, must bring us near to all other disciples of our Divine Master. Already we are very near: for while the things which divide us are mainly theoretical, we are united by our common possession of so much that is practical, affecting daily life. Reading the same Scriptures, using the same means of grace, acknowledging the same moral standards, we might all alike speak of ourselves, in the fashion of the first century, as following the Way. And he who is in the Way is not far from the Truth and the Life.

RELATIONS BETWEEN EVANGELICALS AND BROAD CHURCHMEN*

IF by relations between Evangelicals and Broad Churchmen is meant the recognition of one side by the other, the free acknowledgment of its rightful place in the Church, a readiness to worship with it and work with it in full fellowship, it must be stated frankly that so far as there is any problem for discussion, it is a problem which arises on one side only. For there is no question of the readiness of Liberals to grant all these things ungrudgingly to Evangelicals as they do to Anglo-Catholics. No doubt they believe that they themselves have a vision of divine truth which they desire to impart to others as well, but they aim at doing so by methods of reason alone; they have no wish to narrow the Church down to their own point of view. I do not say this in any spirit of self-glorification; the reasons for the difference of attitude are sufficiently obvious, but it explains the way in which I interpret the subject assigned to me. I understand it as a request for such a statement of the Liberal position as will enable men of other schools to consider whether they can accept the right-hand of fellowship which we ourselves readily extend.

It is well to emphasize the fact that Liberalism does not stand primarily for a set of opinions, but for a method of approach. Liberals are sometimes taunted with not entirely agreeing among themselves. In so far as this is a matter of reproach, I fancy there is a good deal of glass in other schools of thought as well. But the Liberal expects and rejoices in a large measure of disagreement. For he does not set out to assimilate a corpus of doctrines already formed. He does not assume the existence of any infallible authority with the corollary that his business is simply to ascertain what that authority has already said. He tries, however imperfectly, to

* A paper read at the Cheltenham Conference by the Rev. C. W. Emmet, B.D., Fellow of University College, Oxford.

think things out for himself, and when men of independent and fallible minds do this, they are not likely at once to arrive at precisely the same conclusions on a large number of obscure and delicate questions.

But they are agreed in their method and way of approach. And I believe it is true that this method differs more than is often realized from that of other schools, while the conclusions reached are often nearer to the old than is sometimes supposed. In what follows I must speak primarily for myself, but I think that what I say may be taken as fairly typical. No doubt extreme men could be quoted against me at various points, but if you want to get at the real *ethos* of a movement, you will not always get at it from the utterances of the left wing.

The first paper has put before you certain fundamental principles of this method—the unity of truth, the claims of reason, the progressive character of revelation, the difference between faith and belief. I will try to add one or two others, illustrating their bearing on important doctrines.

1. There is a growing sensitiveness to the principle that doctrine must satisfy the moral sense. If we cannot trust the growing ethical insight of humanity at its best as giving us a valid criterion of the character and action of God, we have no firm basis for religion at all. The history of religion has been largely a process by which immoral elements have been gradually eliminated from the conception of the Divine. I need only instance the insistence on the righteousness of God on the part of the eighth century prophets in Israel, or the moralizing of the primitive mythology by the Greek philosophers. Christ made the Fatherhood of God, with all its ethical implications, central and fundamental. The Incarnation itself was a revelation of God in terms of human character at its highest. When, as a corollary of this, we say that God is love, we are penetrating to the very heart of His essence; it is His substance, the first and the last thing about Him.

This then becomes a touchstone by which we test doctrines, however venerable and apparently authoritative. The belief in hell, or in any form of punishment which has not for its object the reformation of the sinner, is to us inconsistent with a serious acceptance of our Lord's revelation of God as Father.

We cannot hold it, whatever its apparent basis in Biblical texts or Church tradition.[1]

The same applies to the 'damnatory' clauses of the Athanasian Creed, or to any view which lays the main emphasis on coming to right conclusions on obscure and difficult points of doctrine, rather than on the right temper of mind and on conduct. What Father could treat his children on the basis of the Athanasian Creed?

It is even more important to notice that it is this principle which lies behind the rejection of 'transactional' theories of the Atonement; in no sense can we set God's justice over against His love.

You may reply that we are insisting one-sidedly on a single aspect, or that the doctrines we criticize are not to you inconsistent with the belief that God is love. But the point at the moment is whether the attempt to make the Fatherhood and love of God the centre and inspiration of our thinking ought to disqualify us from retaining our place in the Church, or make it impossible for our fellow-Christians to co-operate with us. We may be, in the phrase Augustine used of Origen, 'deceived by a certain human kindness,' but at least this is hardly 'the lie in the soul.'

2. We insist that the right way of approach is from the side of psychology and experience. In the often quoted words of Archbishop Temple:

> 'Our theology has been cast in a scholastic mould, *i.e.* all based on logic. We are in need of . . . a theology based on psychology.'

For example, it has been the habit to attempt to deduce principles of worship *a priori*, from the study of what is 'correct' in the sense of its chancing to figure in Bible texts or in the practice of some particular period. Why not see rather how these things actually work? This is not Pragmatism; we need not make apparent success the guarantee of truth. But we do urge that the Sabbath is made for man, that the real criterion of forms of worship, rites and ceremonies is how far they help the soul to God. This implies a tolerant attitude; it recognizes that there must be a generous variety of practice, corres-

[1] In the Essay *The Bible and Hell* in *Immortality* (edited by Canon Streeter), I have tried to show that this basis is in fact much slighter than is generally supposed.

ponding to wide differences of temperament. It is opposed to the notion that any one form of worship, method of conducting it, dress to be worn, or attitude to be assumed, can be in themselves right or wrong, ordered by, or pleasing to, God.

We may apply this principle to the Eucharist. We start from the basis of the reality of a living and present Christ, who is always striving to enter into fellowship with, to give Himself to, the soul. The Holy Communion becomes the method of ready response; it is instinct from first to last with His personality. It works not by any kind of mysterious magic, but by psychological law. We recognize the principle of continuity in God's working. If He is personal, the means of contact between His Spirit and our's cannot be fundamentally different from those which we find at work between man and man.

I know there is the extraordinary idea that to attempt a psychological explanation is somehow to explain away the reality. Dr. Temple wrote not long ago in *The Pilgrim* (Jan., 1921, p. 227):

> 'The claim made [*i.e.* by himself and others] for sacraments is that they are something more than efficient instruments for producing a psychological state; it is claimed that in them God Himself takes action upon the soul.'

Of course He does. But what possible opposition is there between that and the producing of a psychological state? What are the fruits of the Spirit but psychological states, produced by God? What is conversion but a psychological reality from the same source? So with the Atonement, to which I have already referred in another connection. We see in the death of Christ the revelation of the love of God, in a true sense the suffering of God Himself. This is an 'objective' fact; it is not something which we read into the Cross by the exercise of a pious imagination. But it works upon us psychologically; it reveals to us God's readiness to forgive, the attractive beauty of holiness and of love, the horror and the issue of sin. This revelation works upon our hearts; we let Christ in so that we share His life and find a new power to conquer sin. It is a dynamic which has a psychological effect.

A similar insistence on personality gives the key to our view of the future life. With a few exceptions, parallels to which

are, I fancy, to be found in other schools, Liberals insist on the preservation of personality after death as the thing which really matters. We shall remain, or rather we shall become, our true selves. For here the self is still in the making. The term 'spiritual body' expresses this fulness of personality; what form it will take, what will be its relation to the physical body, we do not know, though we reject any idea of the collecting or quickening of its dissolved material particles, and equally the notion of a long disembodied half-existence while waiting for a distant judgment day.

So on the most fundamental of questions, the Divinity of Christ. Many will have seen the papers on this subject, read at the recent Cambridge Conference; I need hardly repeat the warning that those who have not done so should not form their judgment on the strength of the extracts published in the Press. It is abundantly clear that on the basis of experience there is no ambiguity as to the practical attitude taken to our Lord. He is unique and supreme, Lord and Master. And we do insist that this ought to be the Church's test of loyalty to Christ both for laity and for clergy—Is a man willing to take and to follow Christ as his Lord? But there must be also the working out of the theological and philosophical implications of such a faith, and it must be done in a scientific spirit. The thinker cannot be bound by the decisions of the past, however much he may respect them. In particular Liberals claim the right to challenge the old notion of Godhead and Manhood as two distinct 'substances,' to protest against the prevalent docetism and tritheism, and to insist on the reality of the Humanity. But this is not to reject the Incarnation; it is not Unitarianism; still less is it, as it is sometimes absurdly called, Arianism. The one thing for which the modern thinker has no use is a demi-god who is neither God nor man. Here too then we start from what we can learn of personality and from the records of the Life, studied in the light of historical criticism and research, not from *a priori* ideas of what an Incarnation must have implied. We have no knowledge of the conditions under which God could reveal Himself as man, except from what actually happened in the case of Christ.

3. The last principle on which I would insist is the need of freedom. By common consent this is a time of unrest and of

grave perplexity, intellectual no less than moral. It must be met by getting our thinking right—not that thinking stands alone, but because you must have the right background for action and for feeling. So long as new views are simply met by cries of heresy or unfaithfulness, you have the wrong atmosphere. It is very difficult for the student to produce good work under such conditions; it is still harder for the ordinary man to examine it candidly and quietly. That is why there is a growing feeling among Liberals that creeds and formulas must no longer be used in any sense as tests; if the principle of revision be accepted, they may remain as confessions of faith, as standards of the best we know, to which the individual may work his way. But they must no longer be a fence which he must surmount before he can enter the fold or exercise a ministry in it. The discussions arising out of the Faith and Order Conference make it abundantly clear that Nonconformists will not accept creeds on any other basis than this. It is a condition of re-union and it is also the conclusion which many are reaching on other grounds.

With regard to Modernism in general, there are two distinct issues which are often confused. There is the question whether the new views are true, and there is the question whether the holding of them disqualifies a man from retaining his position in the Church or ministry, or at least makes it impossible for his fellow-churchmen to recognize him and to work with him. I take it that the Cheltenham Conference is primarily concerned with the second of these questions. By way of illustration of our position I have made various suggestions, perhaps gently provocative suggestions, on a number of disputed doctrinal points. I trust it will not be thought impertinent if I venture to express the hope that we shall not devote too much time to the discussion of these in detail. The *immediate* issue is not whether we are right in holding them, but what is to be your attitude as Evangelicals to men who hold such views. There has been of late discussion about the claims of a fourth dimension; Surely we are not going to question the claims of the third? The Church of England has suffered High, Low and Broad. I believe the supreme question for the future is whether these three can learn to live and work together in the

spirit of true Christian unity and fellowship. Then with a good conscience shall we be able to go out and preach re-union to other Churches and a Gospel of fellowship to a distracted world. And when the world sees that Christians who do not all think alike yet love one another, then it may listen.

I feel on reading this paper that it may seem a little cold and even unconciliatory, in that I have made no attempt to minimize Modernist views. I desire passionately a better understanding and a mutual fellowship between the various schools of thought and I hope I may claim humbly to have worked for it in the past; but I do not believe that the way to it lies in the watering down of the distinctive doctrines of any school, so long as men really hold these doctrines, or in the attempt to produce some common statement which can be acceptable to all. I know such attempts are in the air. So long as what is intended is only a typical statement which can be adopted as a general standard for purposes of teaching, it may be valuable, but if it is to be used for anything beyond this I see two dangers :—

(1) Such a formula may consist of ambiguous statements which each will interpret as he will. That has been too often the fate of theological statements from the Hebrew Logia of Matthew, referred to by Papias, to, shall I say? the Thirty-Nine Articles.

(2) It may be used to elbow out the more advanced or extreme men in each school. I do not myself agree with Professor Lake, just as I do not agree with those who hold that devotion to the Virgin Mary is the best antidote to heresy, or that salvation depends on holding what we should regard as an immoral view of the Atonement. I put it bluntly because I want to emphasize my dislike of what seem to me doctrines dangerous to true religion. But having said this, I want to say equally bluntly that I do not desire to see such men turned out of the Church of England, still less out of a united and really Catholic Church, by an alliance of moderate or centre men of various schools against the extremists. And I fancy that Liberal opinion as a whole would share this objection. In one of your discussions someone has spoken rather slightingly of the Church of England as ' a theological Noah's Ark which in-

cludes animals of the most diverse habits.' But after all we have the authority of the Baptismal service for believing that the Church is an ark, and from the point of view of its comprehensiveness I am quite prepared to accept the implications. If we have done any gardening, no doubt we are inclined to think that there are some creatures which Noah might well have left to drown, and probably he received much good advice in this direction. But if he had attempted a selection he might have refused shelter to the ancestor of the horse and the dog, and he would certainly have left out not only the hare and the pig, but also many animals which add to the variety of life and call out the spirit of adventure and initiative. In the ark of Christ's Church we do not want merely the tame, well behaved and easily managed species; we need the wild, the difficult, and the dangerous elements as well. No doubt it is annoying to your lamb who ba-as submissively in one corner to find a lion who is roaring somewhat truculently in another. But what are you going to do about it? Of course you can turn out your unruly lion; this makes for immediate peace, but it is one of those short-cuts which solves nothing. Or you can try to teach your lion and your lamb to lie down together. To drop the metaphor, I believe we have got to trust unreservedly to the power of reason and persuasion, *i.e.* to the Spirit of God, to lead men from error to truth, and to the promptings of conscience which will warn a man when his position as a teacher or member of the Church is really untenable. Just as you can only destroy sin by turning the sinner into a good man, so you can only destroy error by making men think something better. Fellowship and co-operation will come not on the lines of an ambiguous lowest common measure of belief, but from frank recognition of the existence of really important differences of belief and of the good faith of those who hold them. This must be coupled with a determination to learn from others and to enter whole-heartedly on that quest for truth which is too great an adventure for its attainment to be possible for any single school or any single Church. The justification for unity in spite of differences is that behind them lies a fundamental identity of aim, of religious experience, and of loyalty to Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

BOOK NOTICES

THE ANGELIC DOCTOR.*

One of the rewards of fame is to be uncritically venerated and uncritically condemned. Such has been the fate of Thomas Aquinas, who is venerated as the inspired mouth-piece of Catholic revelation, and condemned as the obscurantist who enslaved the Church to an elaborate system of dogmatic theology. Neither view is any the more reliable for being simple, or for being popular. Both alike have been largely dissipated by the historian of ideas.

For the critic, as distinct from the partizan, Aquinas is a man of vast erudition with an energetic genius for the systematization of ideas—a theologian with an extraordinarily quick eye for the ultimate bearings of any system of thought upon those intellectual positions to which the Church stood committed. And it is sad, though it is by no means surprising, that one whose magnificent achievement it was triumphantly to carry through an audacious piece of liberal theological policy, should have come to be regarded as the patron saint of petrified theology.

The task to which Aquinas addressed himself was nothing less than the re-expression of the Christian faith in terms of a philosophy hitherto suspected as heterodox, and which had recently, in the hands of exponents who belonged to a different race and religion, taken on definitely anti-Christian characteristics. To baptize Aristotle into Christ was an enterprise which at once places Aquinas, who attempted and may be said to have achieved it, on the same level as Origen, the first and perhaps the greatest in a long succession of Christian philosophers.

When we remember how bitter were Aquinas' contemporaries, even the magnanimous Raymond Lull, against the Stagirite and his Arabian interpreters, the genuine Liberalism and originality of the Thomist policy become conspicuous. And its triumphant success is the best justification of his work. Indeed, he succeeded only too well; giving to the Church such an admirable dogmatic system—such a finished and perfect article—that the temptation to remain satisfied with it has proved irresistible, so that St. Thomas still stands as the basis of Roman Catholic theology.

Dr. Wicksteed, in these *Hibbert Lectures*, presents mediaeval theology to us (as it is seen also in Dr. Rashdall's *Mediaeval Universities*) as a subject full of life and fascination—one which has its bearings on present-day problems; for the history of ideas repeats itself. Modern Scientific Naturalism, for instance, is the more or less exact counterpart of thirteenth century Averroism. To-day also we must make terms with, rather than seek to destroy, the enemy; for Christianity, like an organism, must live by absorbing alien material from without, otherwise it dies of starvation and inanition. Those who deny that this has been the consistent, though often unconscious, policy of Christian theology, close their eyes to the facts of history.

It is not to be supposed, however, that these lectures confine themselves to generalities: the book may be said to constitute a thorough analysis of the sources, the methods, and the finished product, drawn upon, practised, and achieved by Aquinas. What is of particular value are generous

* *Reactions between Dogma and Philosophy*, by Philip H. Wicksteed, M.A., Litt.D. Williams & Norgate, 24/- net; pp. xxvi. + 669.

notes to each lecture, quoting authorities at considerable length; no less than 246 pages being occupied in this way. This is of immense advantage to what may be called the student of the middle sort, who wishes to study his subject seriously, but also has either no access to, or no leisure to study the mediaeval doctors at first hand; who is anxious to read for himself what Boethius, or Pseudo-Dionysius, or Erigena, or Abelard, or Anselm, has to say upon any subject, but who does not happen to live within five minutes' walk of the Bodleian or Rylands Libraries.

No treatment of Aquinas can avoid dealing with his attitude towards Reason and Revelation. As is well known, Aquinas first introduced the theory of twin channels of truth (though not, in his case, twin *sources,* for be believed in one source only—God). Thus he was responsible for some measure of contrast or rivalry between Reason and Revelation, a contrast that neither Anselm nor Abelard had admitted, and one that was emphasized by successors like William of Occam, until it developed into the theory of a double standard of truth—which means scepticism (though possibly the theory may have done good by leaving science a free hand, for what was true for science might not, it was held, be true for theology).

Dr. Wicksteed suggests that Aquinas was forced by his inadequate psychology to adopt his particular theory of Reason and Revelation. Reason for him was the logical, syllogistic, ratiocinative faculty. He recognized no 'logic of the whole personality' and no 'mystic sense.' Hence, as there were certainly some truths which seemed to fall outside Reason as understood by him (and Aristotle), he was forced to fall back upon some other channel of truth—*i.e.* Revelation. This seems a satisfactory explanation. J.C.H.

A MODERNIST CHRISTOLOGY.*

Readers of the *Modern Churchman* will early find themselves at one with the author of this book. On page three these words occur: 'Popularly, Christ Jesus is only God in masquerade, which is an easy conception, popularly.' In revulsion from such a point of view as this comes the attempt to insist on the Perfect Manhood of Jesus of Nazareth. This attempt found its expression from the theological point of view at the Girton Conference; it is finding its practical application wherever Jesus is pointed to as the example of life for man. Man cannot, and will not, attempt to imitate a person whom he suspects of being other than perfectly human. For all that, here is the inspired Portrait of the Incarnate Word which the Fourth Gospel gives us. Can the two be reconciled? Can a single Being be both Perfect God and Perfect Man? That is the problem which confronts a vast number of people to-day, and this unpretentious book may help to enlighten some who are in darkness. It is, in a sense, a revision and an expansion of *The Diary of a Modernist,* and represents the writer's present convictions upon a number of subjects, of which the one we have mentioned bulks the largest. The only quarrel we have with so transparently sincere and honest a book is that the diary-form into which it is cast gives it a somewhat scrappy and unsatisfying appearance. But it is only an appearance, and to dig down into the book is to bring to the surface many precious jewels of thought and spiritual experience. JOHN NORTH.

* *Christianity and Christ*, by William Scott Palmer; pp. viii. + 206. London (Christophers).

CORRESPONDENCE

MODERNISM: A QUERY.

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman.*

Sir,

You accuse me in the July number of having misunderstood Modernism, and gravely misrepresented it in my speech at the E.C.U. Anniversary. You may be right, but I can at least plead in my defence that I have made every effort to understand it, and have read every Modernist book, English and foreign, which I have been able to obtain. As I am publishing a full book on Modernism in the autumn, and am *most anxious* to be just in it, I should be greatly obliged if you would explain the exact meaning of your own definition of Modernism on page 150:

'Where he [the Modernist] differs from the traditionalist is in claiming the right and duty under the progressive revelation of the Holy Spirit to re-interpret or even reject any statement in the Creed which may become incredible as the result of reverent research.'

I take it that you mean that the Modernist claims this liberty *within the Church,* otherwise there is no difference between the Modernist and the Orthodox view of the matter; also that he claims liberty not only to reject the articles of the Creed, but also to preach his rejection, because freedom of thought, without freedom of expression of thought, is an empty boon.

Applying, then, your principle, to the chief articles of the Creed, I wish to ask:—

(1) Do you claim liberty for the Modernist to deny the existence of God, and to believe and teach Atheism;

(2) And liberty to deny God's personality, and to believe and teach Pantheism;

(3) And liberty to deny the Incarnation, and to believe and teach Unitarianism;

(4) And liberty to deny human immortality, and to believe and teach that the soul perishes with the body;

(5 And liberty to deny the Church's holiness, and accordingly to believe and teach Polygamy, the Community of Wives, Antinomianism, Epicureanism, and the ethics of the left-hand worshippers of Siva and Durga?

I am not asking this question for captious reasons, but simply because I am not sure that I understand your meaning. It seems to me either that your statement does not mean what it appears to mean, and therefore ought never to have been made; or else that it constitutes an absolute *reductio ad absurdum* of Modernism.

I remain,

A constant but critical reader of *The Modern Churchman,*

Charles Harris.

Colwall Rectory, Malvern.

August 10th, 1921.

[The sentence cited by our correspondent expresses our conviction exactly. Because the Modernist believes that Christ is the Truth; that

His Spirit is the Spirit of Truth; that His Kingdom is the Kingdom of the Truth; the supreme authority for the Modernist is not Tradition, but Truth. If as the result of his loyalty to Truth, as he understands it, the Modernist is led into teaching what is in conflict with Church tradition, it is not his duty to leave the Church or to forsake the ministry, but it may be the duty of the Church authorities to deprive him. The Church authorities, however, will be well advised in the interests of the Church to enquire before depriving him whether what he is teaching is in conflict with the Truth, not merely with Tradition. By so doing the Church will keep in living touch with the Truth, revise the formulation of her faith at the judgment seat of Truth, and retain the rational, moral, and spiritual authority which ought to be hers. Like most good methods, it demands courage and self-denial. No one may claim liberty to teach anything except the Truth, nor liberty to do anything except what is right. We hope our courteous correspondent will regard this answer as sufficient, although not strictly categorical.—Ed., *Modern Churchman.*]

THE NEED FOR AN ETHICAL CREED.

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman.*

Sir,

As one who was unable to attend the Cambridge Conference, I have read, with great interest and appreciation, the various suggestions for credal reform contained in the papers read at the Conference which are published in the September number of the *Modern Churchman*; and yet none of them appeal to me quite as much as the following passage from *The Mind of the Master* by Dr. Watson (Ian Maclaren):

'No Church since the early centuries has had the courage to formulate an ethical creed, for even those bodies of Christians which have no written theological creeds, yet have implicit affirmations or denials of doctrine as their basis. Imagine a body of Christians who should take their stand on the Sermon of Jesus, and conceive their creed on His lines. Imagine how it would read: "I believe in the Fatherhood of God; I believe in the words of Jesus; I believe in the clean heart; I believe in the service of love; I believe in the unworldly life; I believe in the Beatitudes; I promise to trust God and follow Christ, to forgive my enemies and to 'Seek after the righteousness of God.'" Could any form of words be more elevated, more persuasive, more alluring? Do they not fill the heart and strengthen the conscience? Liberty of thought is allowed; liberty of sinning is alone denied. Who would refuse to sign this creed? They would come from the east and the west, and the north and the south, to its call, and even they who would hesitate to bind themselves to a crusade so arduous would admire it, and long to be worthy. Does one say this is too ideal, too impracticable, too Quixotic? That no Church could stand and work on such a basis? For three too short years the Church of Christ had none else, and later it was by holy living, and not by any metaphysical subtleties, that the primitive Church lived, suffered, and conquered.

Arthur A. Pearson.

Hillsborough, Petersfield.

October 3rd, 1921.

A SIMPLE CREED.

To the Editor of *The Modern Churchman.*

Sir,

May I venture to submit the following simple and practical formula for your consideration?

I believe in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ : we are all one family in Him.

I trust Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour, and strive to obey Him in all things.

I pray the Holy Spirit to guide me into all truth.

That fulfils many of the requirements of the speakers at your recent conference—*e.g.* (1) It is so fundamental that all Christians could join in it. (2) It recognises Jesus as the Revealer of God, and links our sonship with His. (3) It contains a definite challenge, pledging us to conduct which would exclude the profiteer. (4) It emphasises the fact that we have not yet attained to full knowledge. (5) The wording is scriptural—'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.' 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.' 'Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.' 'In Him shall the Gentiles trust.' 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate.' 'The author of salvation unto all them that obey Him.' 'He shall guide you into all the truth.'

I offer this suggestion with all the humility which befits the important subject under discussion.

Gertrude Bayley.

25 Hillgate Crescent, N.

IS THE ATHANASIAN CREED APOLLINARIAN?

To the Editor of the Modern Churchman.

Sir,

I have been reading over Dean Rashdall's paper in the *Modern Churchman* of September, which I also had the privilege of hearing at Cambridge. I find there a footnote which pulls me up; it refers to the (true) doctrine of the complete humanity of Jesus; it reads thus:

'"Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting" (*Athanasian Creed*). The last words are obviously explanatory of the term "man." The reasonable soul is the human soul.'

Dr. Rashdall may be right here (as usual), but he is not obviously right. In this case I venture to think the obvious is wrong. This sentence of the Athanasian Creed, thus interpreted, entirely loses its balance. The apparent balance is as follows:

> Perfect God . . . and . . . perfect man . . . of a Reasonable Soul . . . and . . . human flesh subsisting.

The 'reasonable soul' *seems* to be parallel to the 'Perfect God.' If this were merely a literary imperfection, we might let it go at that, and presume its 'obvious orthodoxy.' But the Creed itself forbids; it insists on interpreting itself in v. 35 (Hahn):

> 'For as the . . . reasonable soul . . . and flesh . . . is one man, so . . . God . . . and man . . . is one Christ.'

Here the identical parallelism is not open to question; the reasonable soul is divine; the flesh is human.

I fear, indeed, that not only was Athanasius (proleptically) an Apollinarian, but the Creed which goes by his name (the *Quicunque*) is Apollinarian too. If so, it is only another reason for its abandonment, whether as a test or in public worship.

Am I wrong? If so, I want to be put right.

DOUGLAS WHITE.

THE PROBLEM OF THE CREEDS.

SIR,

At the late Girton Conference hardly any question, after that of the Two Natures in Christ, was of such importance as the problem of how to deal with the Creeds where their language has become no longer consonant with the belief of instructed Christians. On this topic I made a suggestion which seemed to be very dissatisfying to my hearers. It was this: I urged that, since a verbal revision of the ancient creeds is to my mind not a practicable solution at present, we should retain in use the traditional symbols, the clauses by which till now Churchmen have given expression to their beliefs, and which have in the past been an adequate expression of their devotion to the divine realities; and that we should teach the people, in church and school and elsewhere, *what the exact beliefs are to which we give expression, though an imperfect expression, when we recite those clauses.* I pointed out that this proposal was no new one; that in fact it was what all interested teachers are already doing in such instances as the words which confess the Descent and the Ascension. I went on to urge that the more contentious clauses of the Virgin Birth and the 'bodily' Resurrection could be dealt with on the same principle.

I failed, and still fail, to understand why such a method should be described as an 'explaining away' of Church doctrine or as a tampering with truth. The man in the street might call it so because he is under the ignorant idea that truth between man and man consists in accordance between things and *words,* and not in the correct conveyance in whatever form of speech or act, of a man's *thought.* This ignorance is not confined to the man in the street; it can be met with in educated homes and even in churches. But even the man in the street cannot charge us with falseness when we tell him that by Christ's ascent to heaven we mean not an elevation of a physical body to a physical sky, but a change in the mode of our Lord's existence from a visible to an invisible condition. And if some repeat the 'Conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,' with a mind not assured as to the historic incident of the virginity, but perfectly assured that the Birth was an Incarnation, *and openly profess that this is how they understand the clause*—where is there any want of truthfulness or even of candour? This would not be 'explaining away the creed,' in any faulty manner: it would be the confessor explaining his own belief.

There are helpful analogies in secular life. When a civil law proves to work an injustice through change of human circumstances, but to repeal this law would be inconvenient, we adopt the device of Legal Fiction, that is, we allow the words of the law to be acted on in a way not intended by the makers. There is fiction here, but not deceit or dishonesty. Again, to take a humble example, we direct our servant to say 'Not at Home,' when we are unready to receive visitors. The words are untrue, but the visitor is not deceived; he knows they mean we do not desire company.

I write this not for the insignificant purpose of justifying my suggestion at the Conference, but because I am convinced that this is the way of salvation in the present difficulty about the Creeds. Unless we can either refashion the language of the Creeds without disrupting the Church fellowship (which seems at the present time impracticable), or else, as other members proposed, make a new creed which shall win catholic assent *and retain it permanently* (which is to me inconceivable), we *must* do as I suggested. We must declare the policy of making Churchmen and non-Churchmen understand what it is that is being done when we repeat the ancient words with some change of the meaning with which past Christians repeated them. We are using the ancient Symbol, the Church's unifying watchword, in spite of its inadequacy to convey with accuracy the maturer conception of the common faith held by many of the best instructed Churchmen, for this reason—a uniting symbolism there must be, even as there must be common sacraments of union, and a revised creed would be not a uniting symbol but a disuniting. But we make no secret, use no reserve of what we mean when we utter the words: our fellow-Christian or our non-Christian neighbour knows what we mean. We are discharging the duty of speaking truth one to another as members one of another. If any charge us with untruth because the words do not correctly answer to the facts, we reply that if our words cause our hearer to know what we are thinking, they are the words of truth and of a sound mind. We have done the duty of fellowship in belief, *ἀληθεύομεν ἐν ἀγάπῃ*.

JOHN H. SKRINE.

THE DEITY OF JESUS.

SIR,

In view of the enormous interest awakened by the courageous and most welcome remarks of Dean Rashdall and Rev. R. G. Parsons at the Cambridge Conference of the Churchmen's Union, as reported in the Press, in regard to the Deity of Jesus, it seems to the ordinary lay mind that the following points call for an explanation that would appeal to reason, if we are to regard Him alike as God and as Man.

(1) We need, in the first place, close definitions of the words 'divinity' and 'deity.' It can as readily be proved from dictionaries that the terms are interchangeable as that they are not. If, however, 'divinity' mean possessing in some degree some attributes of God, and 'deity' mean possessing in full degree all the attributes of God, we have a perfectly clear issue before us. According to this, Jesus was 'divine' in a marvellously high degree, a degree not remotely approached by any other; while He as manifestly was not 'Deity.' Again (2) our Lord Himself tells us that God is Spirit, therefore not flesh and blood. It follows that the only element in our Lord that can be described as 'God' was the Spirit of God indwelling Him. But the Spirit of God dwells also in us.

(3) The heaven of heavens cannot contain God, and if we fly to the uttermost parts of the sea we cannot escape from His Presence. He is, in fact, omnipresent. Were the Man, Christ Jesus, 'God,' the Presence of the Deity would necessarily have been circumscribed by the Person of Jesus. (4) In the New Testament we find in many places that God and the Lord Jesus are described as being two distinct Persons; *e.g.*, 'Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ our Lord.' Finally (5) our Lord Himself knew but one God. To Him He prayed,

addressing Him as 'God' and 'Father'; and taught us likewise to pray to His one God and ours. We can readily believe that God (the Spirit, Holy Spirit) was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself; but the day has surely gone by for trying to demonstrate our faith in the Lord Jesus and in His wonderful teaching by proclaiming our belief in what we know to be frankly and utterly incredible—and as frankly and utterly unnecessary.

TEMPORA MUTANTUR.

PREPARATION FOR CONFIRMATION.

SIR,

I doubt whether it is quite realised to what extent the preparation of boys for Confirmation at Public Schools has passed into the hands of laymen. Few of these laymen have had any specific training for the task, and most of them would welcome the chance of attending a course of instruction which could help them in their task.

I should like to suggest that a Conference might be held to discuss this question. Failing this, I should like to suggest that the Churchmen's Union might appoint a small committee and ask them to issue a list of books which might be of use to those engaged in preparing boys for Confirmation.

I ask leave to subscribe myself,

HOUSEMASTER.

[It is proposed to hold a small Conference for Public School Masters on the 16th, 17th and 18th of January, at Ripon Hall, Oxford, to consider this matter. There will be no charge for admission, but, as accommodation is limited, the Principal will be very glad to receive as early as possible notices from any Public School Masters who desire to attend, so that he may issue invitations before Christmas.—ED., *M.C.*]

TWO USEFUL BOOKS.

SIR,

May I suggest that those who use the Revised Lectionary and desire to say a few words in preparing the Lessons will find most admirable notes on all the Lessons, Old Testament and New Testament, in 'The New Lessons Explained,' published by the Oxford University Press in 1920, and expounded by Professors Sanday, Burney, and Mr. Emmet? I wonder if I may also recommend 'A Book of Prayers for Students,' edited by Mr. Hunter (who spoke to us at the Cambridge Conference) and published by the 'Student Christian Movement'? It is about the best book of prayers that I have come across, and extraordinarily helpful.

W. D. BAINBRIDGE BELL.

THE VICARAGE, EPSOM.
17th September, 1921.

Canon Tollinton asks us to express his regret that, owing to an accident, he had not the opportunity to correct the proofs of his paper read at the Cambridge Conference for the first edition of our last issue. Certain uncorrected errors consequently remained, which were only put right in our later copies.

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